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THE WORLD'S BEST NEWS & FACTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

NEWS

Major US
races are
decided
p2 and 4



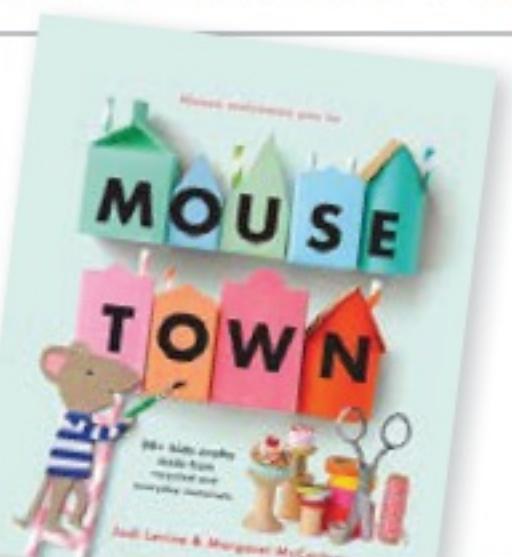
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The lasting
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Make fun
miniature
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Making sense of the world

THE WEEK Junior

WICKED

The popular musical about
two famous witches hits
the big screen p20

THE BEST
MAGAZINE FOR
CURIOS
KIDS





This week's big news



Susie Wiles



Lee Zeldin



Elise Stefanik

About Grover Cleveland



Grover Cleveland, a Democrat, was the 22nd and 24th US President. He was governor of New York when he won his first Presidential term in 1884. In his 1888 bid for reelection, he won the popular vote but lost in the Electoral College. He was elected President again in 1892 and took office in 1893.

President-elect chooses staff

Following his Election Day win, former President Donald Trump began preparing to return to the White House. When *The Week Junior* went to press on November 12, he had started selecting his top advisers.

What was the final electoral count?

To win the Presidency, a candidate needs 270 votes in the Electoral College (the system used to elect Presidents in the US). Trump, a Republican who served as the nation's 45th president from 2017 to 2021, won 312 electoral votes. His opponent, Vice President Kamala Harris, a Democrat, won 226. Trump won all seven "swing" states, which had been expected to decide the election: Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. At press time, at least 11 states were still counting votes, but Trump already had enough to ensure his victory.

How was voter turnout?

Although overall voter turnout is still being calculated, it is expected to be the second-highest in the past 100 years. In the 2020 Presidential election, 154.6 million people voted. At press time, more than 148 million

people had voted in this year's election. Trump had 75.1 million votes compared to 71.8 million for Harris. This means that in addition to winning the Electoral College vote, Trump also won the popular vote (the number of individuals who vote for a candidate).

What did Harris say?

Harris upheld the long-standing tradition of congratulating the winner after the election, calling Trump the next day. She also gave a concession speech on November 6 at Howard University, the historically Black university in Washington, DC, where she received her bachelor's degree. Harris said, "A fundamental principle of American democracy is that when we lose an election, we accept the results." She also said she will keep

working on issues that are important to her supporters. "While I concede this election, I do not concede the fight that fueled this campaign," she told them. "You have the capacity to do extraordinary good in the world."

How is Trump preparing to take office?

Incoming Presidents must fill about 4,000 positions in their administration, including their cabinet (group of top government

officials). Trump made several announcements starting on November 7. He appointed his chief campaign adviser, Susie Wiles, to be White House chief of staff, making her the first woman to hold that position. He also nominated Elise Stefanik to be US ambassador to the United Nations. Stefanik, who is from northern New York, currently serves in the US House of Representatives (one half of Congress), where she is chair of the House Republican Conference. Former Representative Lee Zeldin, also from New York, was nominated to lead the Environmental Protection Agency. Trump selected Kristi Noem, governor of South Dakota, to take charge of the Department of Homeland Security. Stefanik, Zeldin, and Noem will need to be confirmed by the Senate (other half of Congress), but Wiles will not.

What will happen next?

Trump will be the second US President to serve a non-consecutive second term. Grover Cleveland was the first (see box above). President Joe Biden said on November 7 that he will ensure a "peaceful and orderly transition" of power to Trump and will host him at the White House on November 13 to discuss the details. Trump will be sworn in on Inauguration Day, January 20, 2025, in Washington, DC.

SECOND IN COMMAND
Until 1804, the candidate who came in second place in US Presidential elections served as Vice President.

This week's big news

Australia calls for social media ban

On November 7, Australia proposed a law that would ban children under age 16 from using most forms of social media, including TikTok and Instagram. If the legislation passes, it will be the first of its kind in the world.

Currently, most social media companies require children under 13 to get parental consent to create an account. Under Australia's law, parents would not be allowed to give consent and the existing accounts of anyone under 16 would be closed. Anthony Albanese, Australia's prime minister, said social media companies would be held responsible for upholding the law and face fines for failing to do so. Meta, which owns Instagram, said it will respect any law Australia puts in place.

Both major political parties in Australia support the law, citing research showing that the use of social media can be harmful to children. "The safety and mental health of our young people has to be a priority," Albanese said. A vote is expected to take place in Parliament this year, and the law, if it passes, would go into effect in late 2025.



TRIPLE THE FUN

Three red panda siblings—two males and a female—were born at the Lincoln Children's Zoo in Nebraska. Triplets are rare for the species, which is endangered. "The cubs are healthy and thriving," the zoo said.



The cubs



Founders and leaders of the organizations that won this year's Earthshot Prize

DID YOU KNOW?

The Earthshot Prize was inspired by US President John F. Kennedy's Moonshot challenge, which led to the US putting the first person on the Moon in 1969.

Earthshot winners announced

The 2024 Earthshot Prize winners were announced at a ceremony in Cape Town, South Africa, on November 6. Established by Prince William of the UK, the prize recognizes efforts to protect and restore Earth's environment. Each winner will receive about \$1.3 million.

The Earthshot Prize was first awarded in 2021 and will be given out every year in the 2020s. Each Earthshot winner represents one of the organization's five goals: protecting and restoring nature, cleaning our air, reviving our oceans, building a waste-free world, and fixing our climate.

The prize for protecting and restoring nature went to the Altyn Dala Conservation Initiative, which is working to save the Saiga antelope from extinction and conserving the Kazakhstan golden steppe habitat. The Green Africa Youth

Organization, which seeks to reduce pollution through better waste management practices, was recognized for working to clean our air.

The High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, a network of more than 100 countries, was honored for its efforts to protect our oceans. The prize for working to build a waste-free world went to Keep IT Cool, which makes solar-powered refrigerators to prevent food from spoiling. Advanced Thermovoltaic Systems, which developed a technology that enables industries to turn wasted heat into electricity, was recognized for its efforts to fix our climate.

In a statement, Prince William said of the winners, "Let their success inspire us to act with urgency and optimism, ensuring a thriving world for future generations."

HONORING VETERANS

On November 11, cities and towns across the US held Veterans Day parades, concerts, and family events to honor those who have served in the armed forces. Many restaurants also offered free meals to members of the military, while a clothing company paid off \$2.5 million in medical debt for veterans.



The tree





National news



Julie Fedorchak of North Dakota will serve in the House of Representatives.

LOOKING AHEAD

The next major US election—the midterm elections, which are held halfway through a President's term—will take place in November 2026.



Josh Stein is North Carolina's newly elected governor.

Making history in Georgia



On Election Day, Bryce Berry (above), a Democrat, was elected to Georgia's General Assembly. Berry, a 23-year-old teacher, will be the youngest person to serve in Georgia's state legislature. He called his victory "an incredible honor" and said improving Georgia's education system will be a top priority.

Senate, House, and governor results

As states work to finish counting votes from this year's election, Republicans have won control of the Senate (one half of Congress, the branch of government that makes laws) and are expected to retain a majority of seats in the House of Representatives (the other half of Congress). Historic wins for governors also took place.

What happened in the Senate?

The Senate, which is made up of two elected officials from each state who serve six-year terms, had 34 seats up for election. Republicans won enough to have the majority of seats, at 53, while 47 lawmakers will vote with the Democrats. The Senate was controlled by the Democrats before the election, and control will now switch parties. The current Majority Leader, Chuck Schumer, a

Democrat, will become the Minority Leader, and Republicans will choose a new Majority Leader.

What happened in the House?

Going into the election, Republicans held a slim majority of seats in the House, which is made up of 435 officials who are elected by districts in their state every two years. When *The Week Junior* went to press on November 12, Republicans were leading with 214 seats to the Democrats' 205 seats, with 16 races to be called. In one noteworthy result, North Dakota became the 49th state to elect a woman to Congress when Republican Julie Fedorchak won her race. (Mississippi is the only state that hasn't elected a woman.) If Republicans keep control, the current Speaker of the House, Mike Johnson, has asked his party to reelect him.

What happened with governor races?

Republicans won eight of the 11 governor races that took place. With the election of Republican Kelly Ayotte in New Hampshire, 13 women will now serve as governor at the same time, a new record. North Carolina made history by electing its first Jewish governor, Democrat Josh Stein.

What else happened?

In some states, people voted on proposals to raise the minimum wage. An increase to \$15 an hour was approved by Missouri residents to begin in 2026 and by Alaska residents to take effect in 2027. In California, where an increase to \$18 an hour was proposed, votes were still being counted at press time and experts said the measure appeared likely to fail.

WORD OF THE WEEK

SKELF

The University of Reading in the UK has been studying the dance patterns of snowflakes. There are many different words to describe snowflakes, and many of them come from the language of Scots. For example, a "skelf" is a particularly large snowflake, while a *flindrikin* is a very light snow shower.



THE WEEK IN HISTORY

November 22, 1995

Toy Story arrives in theaters

On November 22, 1995, *Toy Story*, the first fully computer-animated movie, was released. Previously, animated films had been made using hand-drawn sketches. Disney worked with Pixar, a new studio, to produce the film, which was about toys that come to life when humans aren't around. The movie was a hit, earning nearly \$400 million at the box office and leading to three successful sequels.





A firefighter in California

Wildfires burning on both coasts

Due to extremely dry weather, major blazes are burning on the West and East coasts of the US. In California, a fire in Ventura County grew to 20,000 acres, which caused 10,000 people to be evacuated from their homes. On the East Coast, fires in Passaic County in New Jersey grew to 3,000 acres and crossed into New York state. When *The Week Junior* went to press, firefighters were trying to control the blazes.



Beyoncé

Grammy nominations released

Nominees for the 2025 Grammy Awards have been announced. Beyoncé leads with 11, bringing her career total to 99 nominations, the most of any artist in history. Post Malone received seven nods, while Taylor Swift and first-time nominees Sabrina Carpenter and Chappell Roan had six each. The ceremony will air live on CBS on February 2, 2025, from Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles, California.



Two of the cards

Top dogs to get trading cards

Topps, the trading card company, and the Westminster Dog Show, the nation's most prestigious dog show, have created a new collection of 40 cards called "Stars of the Show." The cards feature winning dogs, such as Wasabi the Pekingese (above right) and Trumpet the Bloodhound. "Heroes come in all different forms, and in this case it's champion dogs," said a Topps executive.



Quincy Jones in 2019

WOW!
Quincy Jones arranged Frank Sinatra's hit "Fly Me to the Moon," which was played during NASA's Moon landing in 1969.

Music legend is remembered

Quincy Jones, a pioneering musician, composer, and record producer, died on November 3 at age 91. During his career of more than 70 years, he helped shape and define pop, jazz, and R&B music into the genres they are known as today.

Born in 1933 in Chicago, Illinois, Jones studied at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts. Although he began his career playing the trumpet, he gained fame by writing, arranging, and producing music for other artists, including such legends as Ray Charles, Frank Sinatra, and Aretha Franklin. He produced Michael Jackson's album *Thriller*, which was released in 1982 and remains the best-selling album of all time.

Jones became the first Black vice president of a major record label in 1964, and he also made a significant impact in film, composing soundtracks for award-winning movies including *The Wiz* in 1978 and *The Color*

Purple in 1985. In addition, he supported many causes through music. In 1985, for example, he took a lead role in producing "We Are the World," a best-selling song that raised money to fight severe hunger in Ethiopia.

Jones was nominated for 80 Grammy Awards and won 28, the third-highest total of any artist. He was the first Black composer to be nominated for an Oscar (top film award) for Best Original Song in 1968. In 2011, he was awarded the National Medal of Arts, the nation's highest honor in the arts.

Many prominent figures expressed their admiration for Jones. Former President Barack Obama praised him for paving the way for Black executives to succeed in entertainment. Media icon Oprah Winfrey, who starred in *The Color Purple*, commended Jones for helping other artists. "He walked around with his heart wide open," she said.



Quincy Jones with his Grammy Awards in 1991

THE WEEK'S SILLIEST HEADLINE

"Deer runs loose through Missouri nail salon" UPI





Around the world



Olaf Scholz (left)
and Christian Lindner

Berlin, Germany Finance minister fired

On November 6, Germany's top leader, Olaf Scholz, fired his finance minister, Christian Lindner, because of disagreements about how the government should raise money. Lindner's removal caused the coalition (group of political parties working together) that was ruling Germany to break down. A vote of confidence in Scholz is expected to be held in December. If he loses, new national elections will take place in February.



Guyanese people
will get a payout.

Guyana Government to give cash payments

The president of Guyana, Irfaan Ali, has announced that every adult living in the country will be given a one-time payment of 100,000 Guyanese dollars (about \$479). This is a way for people living in Guyana to benefit from the money the government is making from selling oil. Each household was originally going to receive the payment, but there were concerns that this would leave out younger adults who don't have their own homes yet.



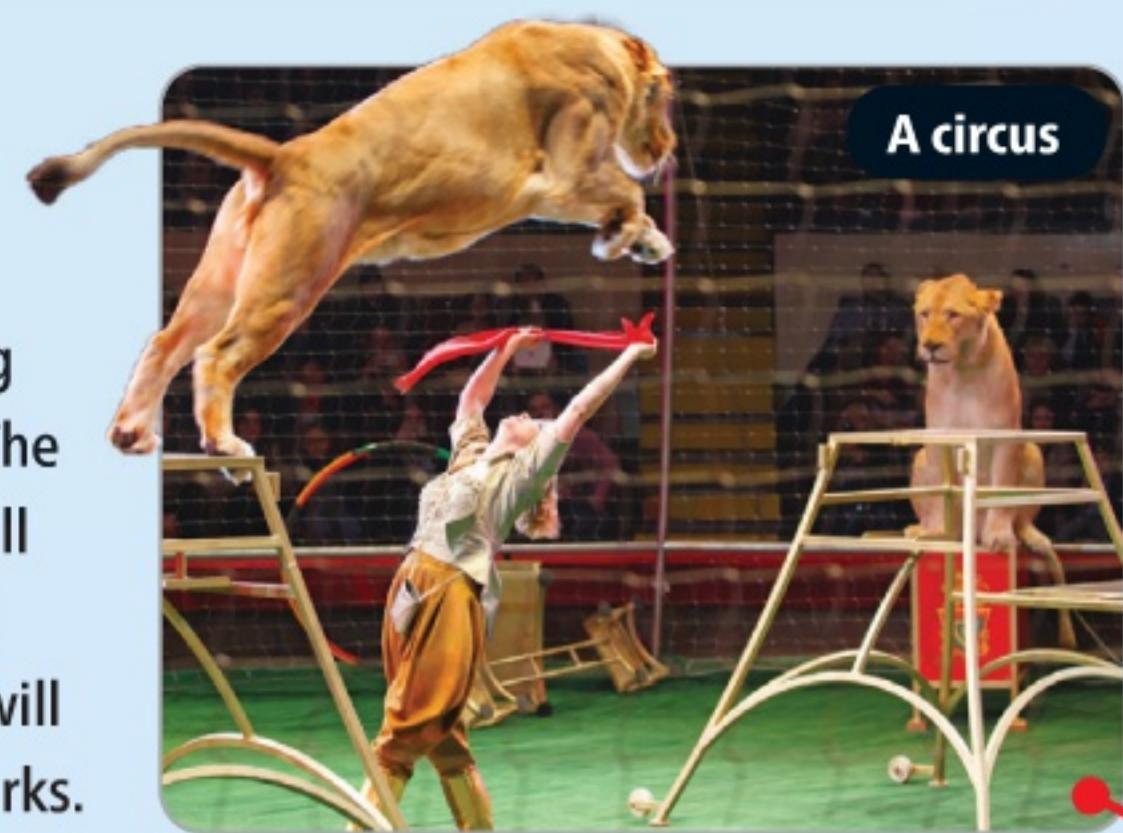
Tourists
at Pompeii

Pompeii, Italy Tourist numbers restricted

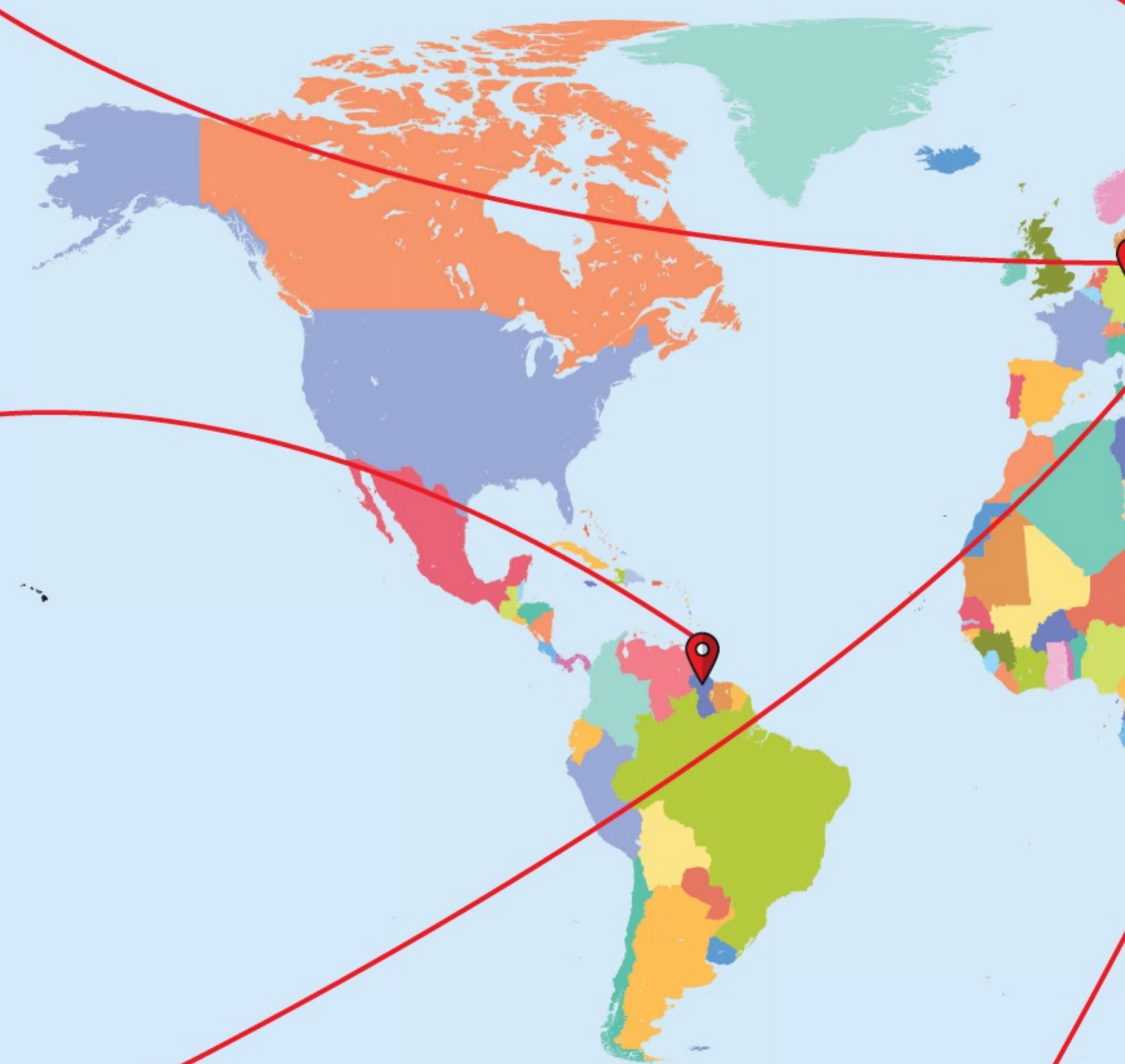
Authorities have introduced a daily limit of 20,000 visitors to the ancient Roman city of Pompeii, which was destroyed in 79 CE when Mount Vesuvius erupted. About 15,000 people usually visit per day, but numbers have been rising—a record 36,000 people went on October 6, when entry was free. The limit was set to keep visitors safe and protect the historic site.

Uzbekistan Ban on wild animals

Uzbekistan has introduced a new law that will ban the use of wild animals—including elephants, tigers, and bears—in circuses. The ban, which will take effect on January 1, will also make it illegal to keep wild animals as pets. People who own these kinds of pets will have to transfer them to zoos or wildlife parks.

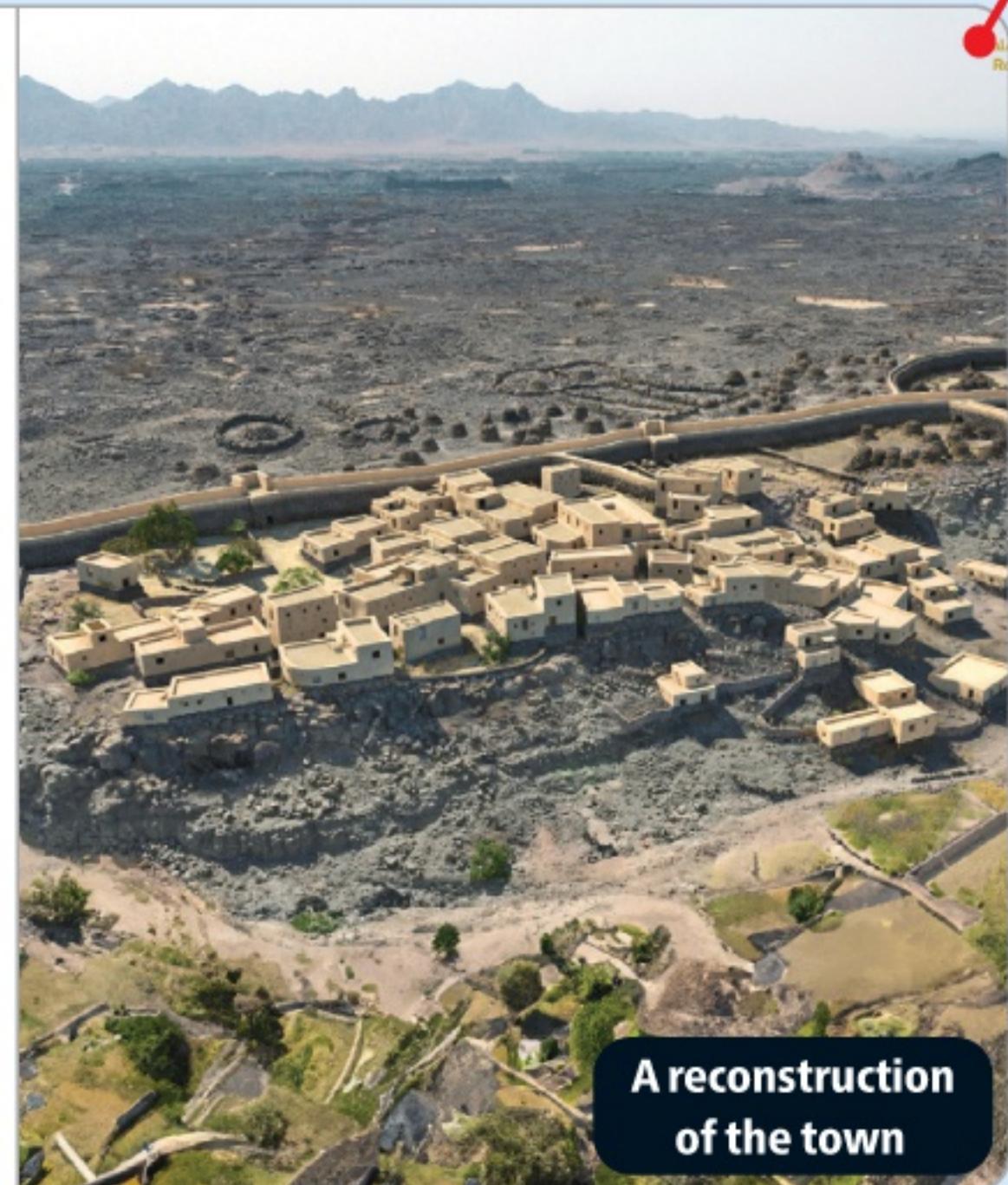


A circus



Madinah, Saudi Arabia Ancient town discovered

Researchers have found evidence of an ancient town that is now hidden under an oasis (fertile land surrounded by desert). The town, which has been named al-Natah, was built about 4,000 years ago. Experts think that approximately 500 people lived there before it was abandoned about 1,000 years later. There may have been many similar towns across northern Arabia during the same time period.



A reconstruction
of the town

Around the world



A great Indian bustard chick

Rajasthan, India Endangered bird hatches

Scientists have successfully hatched a great Indian bustard chick as part of a breeding program to help the species, which is critically endangered due to habitat loss and illegal hunting. Researchers hope they can boost the population by breeding and releasing the birds into the wild. Conservationists say the birds' habitats also need to be protected.



Henan, China Roads blocked by dumpling quest

On the night of November 8, more than 100,000 cyclists pedaled about 30 miles from Zhengzhou to Kaifeng, a city known for its dumplings. The trend began in June, when four students biked the route to get dumplings and their social media posts about it went viral. As the number of cyclists grew, locals began complaining about bikes blocking car lanes. People seeking dumplings are now encouraged to travel by train or bus instead.



Ice cream from Minimal

Taichung, Taiwan Ice cream shop earns a prized star

A store called Minimal, located in Taichung, has become the first ice cream shop to earn a Michelin star. About 3,500 of the world's top restaurants hold the honor awarded by the Michelin company. The takeout shop offers six rotating flavors, while its upstairs dining room features frozen treats with seasonal ingredients. Chef Arvin Wan, who opened Minimal in 2021, said he hopes adults can rediscover the joy of eating ice cream.



The conference venue

Baku, Azerbaijan Climate summit held

Delegates from nearly 200 countries have arrived in Baku for the COP29 climate change conference. At the annual meeting, set to take place from November 11–22, nations will share updates on their plans to reduce emissions of planet-warming gases. Another top priority this year is deciding how much money wealthier nations should contribute to help poorer countries adapt to the changing climate and switch to green energy, such as wind power.



Workers collect the blobs.

New South Wales, Australia Scientists test mysterious beach blobs

Researchers have solved the mystery of what's inside some sticky blobs that washed up onshore in October, forcing beaches to close. Tests revealed that the blobs were a mixture of waste materials, including human hair, cooking oil, and chemicals. Although experts now know what they are made of, they still don't know exactly where the debris came from.



The big debate

Should hotels ban single-use toiletries?

Some people love those tiny bottles, but others say they're bad for the planet.

What you need to know

- Traditionally, hotels have provided small single-use bottles of products like shampoo, conditioner, and lotion for guests. The bottles are used once, then thrown out or recycled.
- In an effort to reduce waste, some larger hotel chains, such as Marriott, IHG, and Hyatt, have switched to larger, refillable pump bottles.
- Globally, the hotel industry creates about 150 million tons of plastic waste annually, including straws, coffee cups, and water bottles.



WOW!
There are about 187,000 hotels across the world, with more than 17.5 million guest rooms.

When you check into a hotel room, it's fun to find a collection of personal-size toiletries waiting for you. They're cute and convenient—but that comes at a cost. Plastic waste is a huge problem for our planet, and every year, about 8 million tons of plastic ends up in the ocean. Some people say getting rid of small single-use toiletries would make a difference. Starting in January 2025, New York state is banning them in hotels that have more than 50 rooms, and Washington will enforce a similar rule in 2027. California has already enacted a ban. But other people say that's not the right move. What do you think? Should hotels ban single-use toiletries?

YES Three reasons hotels should ban single-use toiletries

- Most single-use plastics end up in landfills and oceans, where they harm mammals, fish, and seabirds.
- With single-use toiletries, the product itself often goes to waste too.
- People just need to get used to refillable containers or, if they prefer, bring their own toiletries from home.

NO Three reasons hotels should not ban single-use toiletries

- There's no way to know if refillable toiletries are sanitary.
- It's really inconvenient to pack and carry bottles of your own toiletry products in your suitcase.
- Hotels could work on getting rid of many of the other single-use plastics they use every day.

LAST WEEK'S POLL

Last week, we asked if you should go to school if you're sick. You voted nearly unanimously that kids should stay home when they're not feeling well.

92%
NO

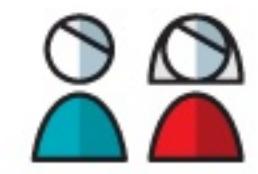
8%
YES



What do you think?

Now that you've read a bit more about this issue, visit kids.theweekjunior.com/polls so you can vote in our debate. Vote **YES** if you think hotels should ban single-use toiletries or **NO** if you don't. We'll publish the results next week.

The goal of the big debate is to present two sides of an issue fairly in order to stimulate discussion and allow our readers to make up their minds. The views on this page do not reflect those of *The Week Junior*, and the page is not funded by third parties.



A life in storytelling

In his debut novel, Paul Siefken highlights the history of his hometown.

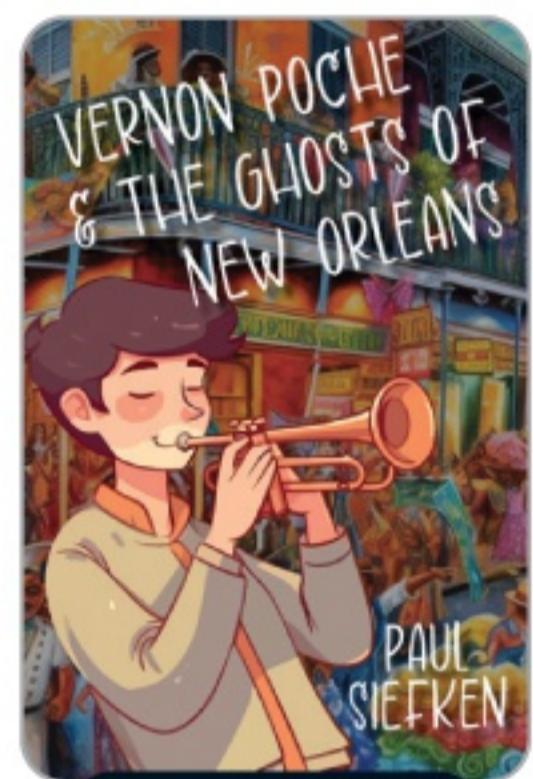
For nearly 30 years, Paul Siefken has shaped children's television. He has worked at Cartoon Network and PBS Kids, and he is now the president of Fred Rogers Productions, the creator of *Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood* and other shows. Now he has written his debut novel, *Vernon Poche & the Ghosts of New Orleans*, a middle-grade historical fantasy about teens Vernon and Alisha uncovering their city's rich history with the help of a mysterious dog.

Siefken himself grew up in New Orleans, Louisiana. When he was in high school, his English teacher recognized his talent and steered him toward creative writing. After graduating from Duke University, he taught high school English for a few years before moving into TV. As the leader of the organization founded by Fred

Rogers, the creator of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*, Siefken works to preserve Rogers' legacy of promoting kindness and empathy through media.

As an author, Siefken has set out to honor the 300-year-old history of New Orleans, especially after the city was devastated by Hurricane Katrina in 2005. In his novel, the main characters uncover the city's past through the ghosts of local figures like jazz legend King Oliver and singer Mahalia Jackson. He told *The Week Junior* his aim was for the book "not to feel like a history lesson but an adventure."

Siefken has advice for young writers who want to create their own stories. "Don't second-guess yourself," he said. "Put your big, zany ideas on paper because you never know where they might take you."



The new book



DID YOU KNOW?

New Orleans, Louisiana, was founded in 1718 by French colonists and named La Nouvelle-Orléans in honor of the Duke of Orleans.

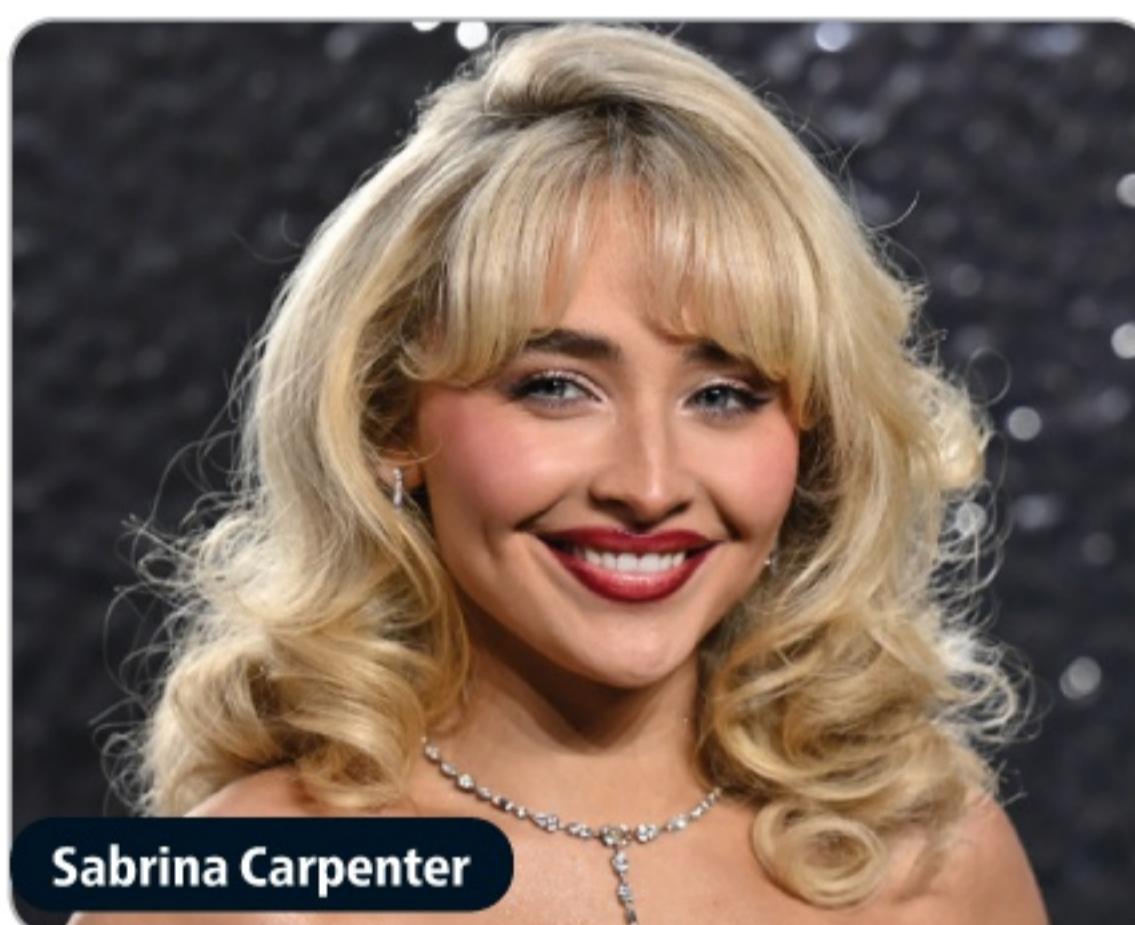
Paul Siefken

Teen scientist wins

Sirish Subash, a 14-year-old from Snellville, Georgia, has won the 2024 3M Young Scientist Challenge, a national student science competition with a \$25,000 cash prize. He created PestISCAND, an at-home pesticide detector that spots harmful residues on produce. Pesticides are chemicals that kill pests but can pose health risks, such as cancer, when they remain on food. He was inspired by data showing that most produce contains residues. Subash said he hopes to continue "building devices that can help make the world a better place."



Sirish Subash



Making music history

In October, pop singer-songwriter Sabrina Carpenter, age 25, became the first artist in this decade to maintain three songs in the top 10 of the Billboard Hot 100 music chart for eight consecutive weeks. The songs were "Espresso," "Taste," and "Please, Please, Please" from her sixth studio album, *Short n' Sweet*, which debuted at number one when it was released in August. Carpenter's massive fame began with "Espresso," her first song to exceed 1 billion streams on Spotify. She said she does not write music to top charts. Instead, she called the success "sprinkles on top of the sundae."

OVERHEARD

“ ”



“We take life a little too seriously on Earth.”

NASA astronaut Sunita Williams, age 59, who recently became the new commander of the International Space Station (ISS)



Animals and the environment



Congo's rich wildlife

More than 1,200 bird species and hundreds of mammals, fish, and reptiles live in the Congo Basin. Wild bonobos, a primate similar to chimpanzees, and hoofed mammals called okapis are found only in the Congo. The world's largest frog species, the goliath frog, also lives there.



The Congo

Animals meet in forest clearings

Tropical rainforests are known for having thick layers of tree cover, called canopies, that are dense enough to block sunlight. The rainforests in the Republic of the Congo, in Africa, also feature many treeless clearings where animals of different species gather together.

"Animals are extremely attracted to these giant clearings in the middle of the forest, including many endangered animals like the Western lowland gorilla and the African forest elephant," said Evan Hockridge of Harvard University in Massachusetts.

Hockridge recently led a study on these clearings, which the Indigenous (first to inhabit a place) Ba'aka people call bais.



African forest buffaloes in a bai

Hockridge came across a bai while doing research in Congo's Odzala-Kokoua National Park in 2021. He and a team of researchers then spent years gathering data on them, using drone footage and satellite images to examine bais in the national park. They also took soil samples and placed camera traps in the bais.

The research team identified more than 2,000 bais in the park, far more than previously estimated. They confirmed that a wide variety of animals visit the bais, including forest buffaloes, bongos, African green pigeons, spotted hyenas, and lions.

For plant eaters, bais offer an open landscape for grazing that may make it easier to spot

approaching predators. Families of forest elephants travel from bai to bai, socializing with one another and eating the nutrient-rich soil while the calves use the space to play. Bais also give female and male gorillas a place to meet potential mates. The team found that the bais visited by gorillas and the bais visited by elephants have different kinds of plants, although they are not sure why this is the case.

Hockridge hopes his study will be a "starting point" for further research on bais. Scientists are still not certain how these landscapes formed or if they stay the same or change over time. "There's a great need to understand what's happening with these bais because they're so important to organisms we're trying to conserve," Hockridge said. "Our goal is to understand how animals are interacting with these clearings."



PLACE OF THE WEEK

Galápagos Islands, Ecuador

This group of 19 islands, spread across 23,000 square miles of ocean, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and has been called a "living museum." The Galápagos' unique wildlife inspired British naturalist Charles Darwin's theory of evolution (development of animals and plants slowly over time) and changed the way we think about life on Earth. The islands are a habitat for animals that can't be found anywhere else, such as Galápagos giant tortoises, which are some of the largest tortoises in the world. Other animals found there include fur seals and the Sally lightfoot crab.



A Galápagos giant tortoise



HEAR HERE

Dogs have about 18 muscles that allow them to rotate, raise, and lower each of their ears.

Slowing down speech improves understanding.

Talking slowly helps dogs listen

Slow and steady wins the race—and also the way to a dog's heart. A new study reveals that when people speak slowly to their canine companions, their pets understand them better.

Researchers from the University of Geneva in Switzerland studied 30 vocal sounds dogs make, such as growls, barks, and whines. They also analyzed the speech rates of 27 people talking to other people and 22 people speaking to dogs. Then the researchers looked at the brain activity of the dogs and humans to see their responses.

According to the study, humans tend to speak much faster than dogs vocalize—about four syllables per second compared to two sounds per second. But when speaking to the dogs, people slowed their speech rhythm to about three syllables per second, a rate much closer to the dogs' natural speed. When they did this, the animals could mentally process and understand more of the human commands. The researchers think humans have learned to slow down their speech in order to make better connections with their four-legged friends.

Animal of the week

Sea robin



Researchers recently found that some species of sea robin, a kind of fish that can walk, use their shovel-like legs to taste food and find prey hiding on the ocean floor. The legs have sensors called papillae, which are similar to human taste buds.

- **LIFE SPAN:** 8 to 11 years
- **HABITAT:** Salt marshes and warm ocean waters
- **SIZE:** Up to 28 inches
- **DIET:** Mollusks, crustaceans, shrimp, other fish
- **FUN FACT:** Unlike other walking fish, sea robins can move each leg individually.



Good week / Bad week



Ridgway's rails

Seven light-footed Ridgway's rails have been released into the wild at a naval base in California. Experts are working to restore the population of the endangered birds, which play a key role in keeping their wetland habitats healthy.

Big cats in Vietnam

In zoos in southern Vietnam this fall, 47 tigers, three lions, and a panther have died from H5N1, a virus that causes bird flu. The virus, which initially spread among wild birds, has also spread to cows, dolphins, and polar bears.



Bradley Lawrence

Animal curator,
Phoenix Zoo

Not all lizards are capable of growing back their tails. Those that can will "drop" their tails as a defense mechanism called tail autonomy. Certain cells then "turn on" and produce a new tail made of cartilage (flexible tissue) but no bones or nerves. The tail is regenerated, but it's not perfect.



"What makes lizards grow back their tails after they've fallen off?"

Claire, 9, Colorado

Do you have a question for an animal expert? Send it to hello@theweekjunior.com. Find out more about the Phoenix Zoo at phoenixzoo.org.



All about Frida Kahlo

A bold and brilliant

Frida Kahlo overcame adversity in her youth to flourish as an artist.

A trailblazing Mexican artist named Frida Kahlo created work that made people take notice during her short but influential life and long after.

Early years

The artist—whose full name was Magdalena Carmen Frida Kahlo y Calderón—was born on July 6, 1907, in Coyoacán, Mexico City.

As a young girl, she helped her photographer father in his studio. At age 6, she contracted polio, a disease that affects the nerves. To regain her strength, she swam and played soccer. She wanted to become a doctor and enrolled in the National Preparatory School in Mexico City in 1922. At age 18, Kahlo had a serious bus accident and suffered many injuries. Bedridden for months, she left school. To cope during her long recovery, she started painting. With the help of a lap easel in her bed, she painted the best subject she had—herself.



As a young girl



Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera

Finding her voice

In 1929, Kahlo married Diego Rivera, a famous artist known for his murals (large-scale paintings on walls). His work brought them to live in US cities such as San Francisco, Detroit, and New York, where she was initially known as Rivera's wife. But Kahlo's paintings soon got noticed. Her art was often a reflection of her life, her thoughts, and her emotions. She flourished as an artist after she moved back to Mexico in 1933. Between 1937 and 1938, Kahlo produced about 20 paintings, the most she had made in a year.



Frida Kahlo once said, "The only thing I know is that I paint because I need to, and I paint whatever passes through my head without any other consideration."



Me and My Parrots

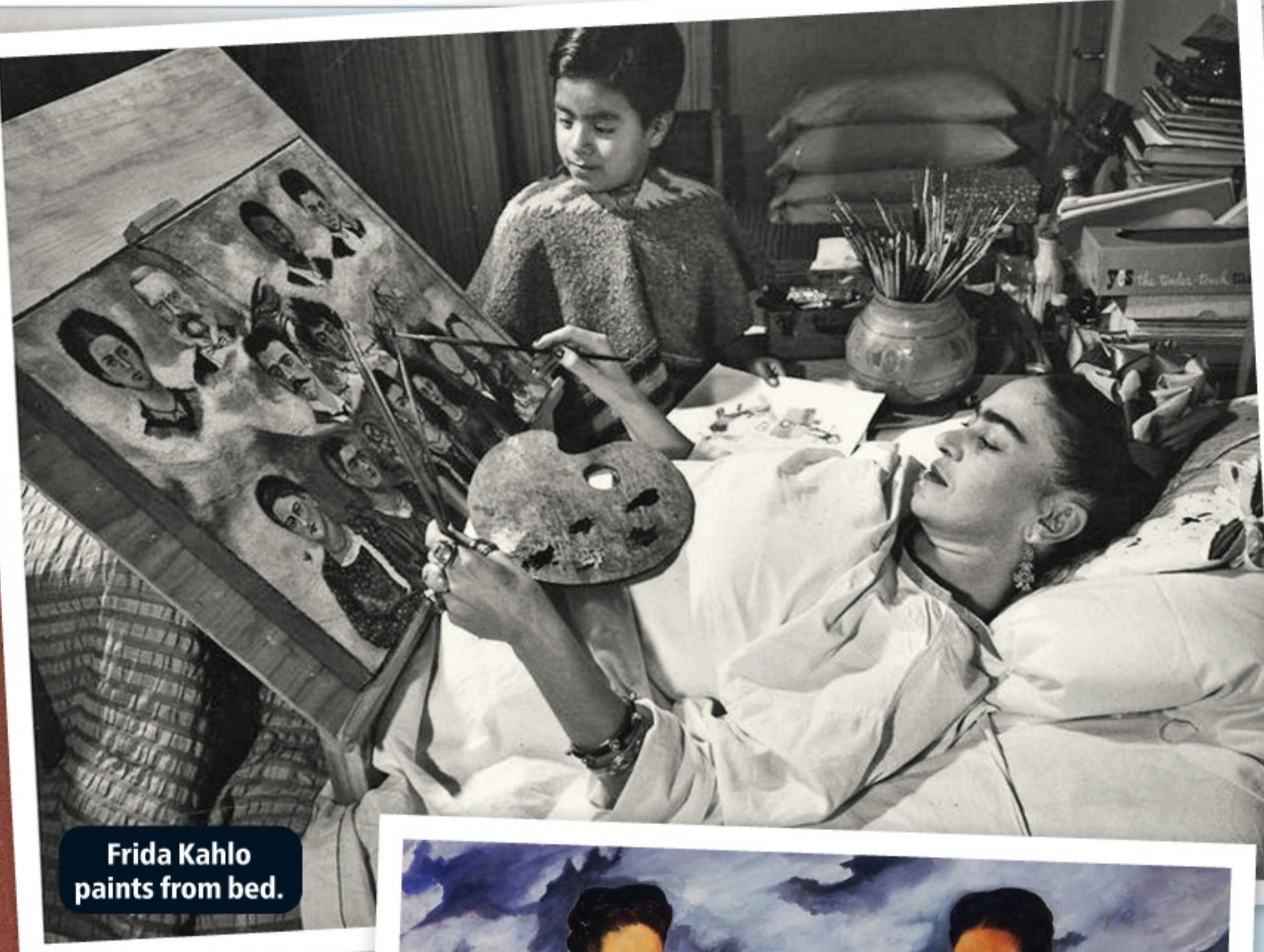
The artist's pets

Frida Kahlo was very fond of animals. In fact, she kept many pets at her Mexico City home, La Casa Azul (the Blue House), which is now Museo Frida Kahlo (the Frida Kahlo Museum). Among them were two spider monkeys named Fulang-Chang

and Caimito de Guayabal. She also had Bonito, an Amazon parrot; Granizo, a fawn; Gertrudis Caca Blanca, an eagle; Señor Xólotli, a hairless dog; and tortoises and ducks. Many of these animals were featured in her paintings, such as *Me and My Parrots* (left) and *Fulang-Chang and I* (far right).



cultural icon



Frida Kahlo paints from bed.



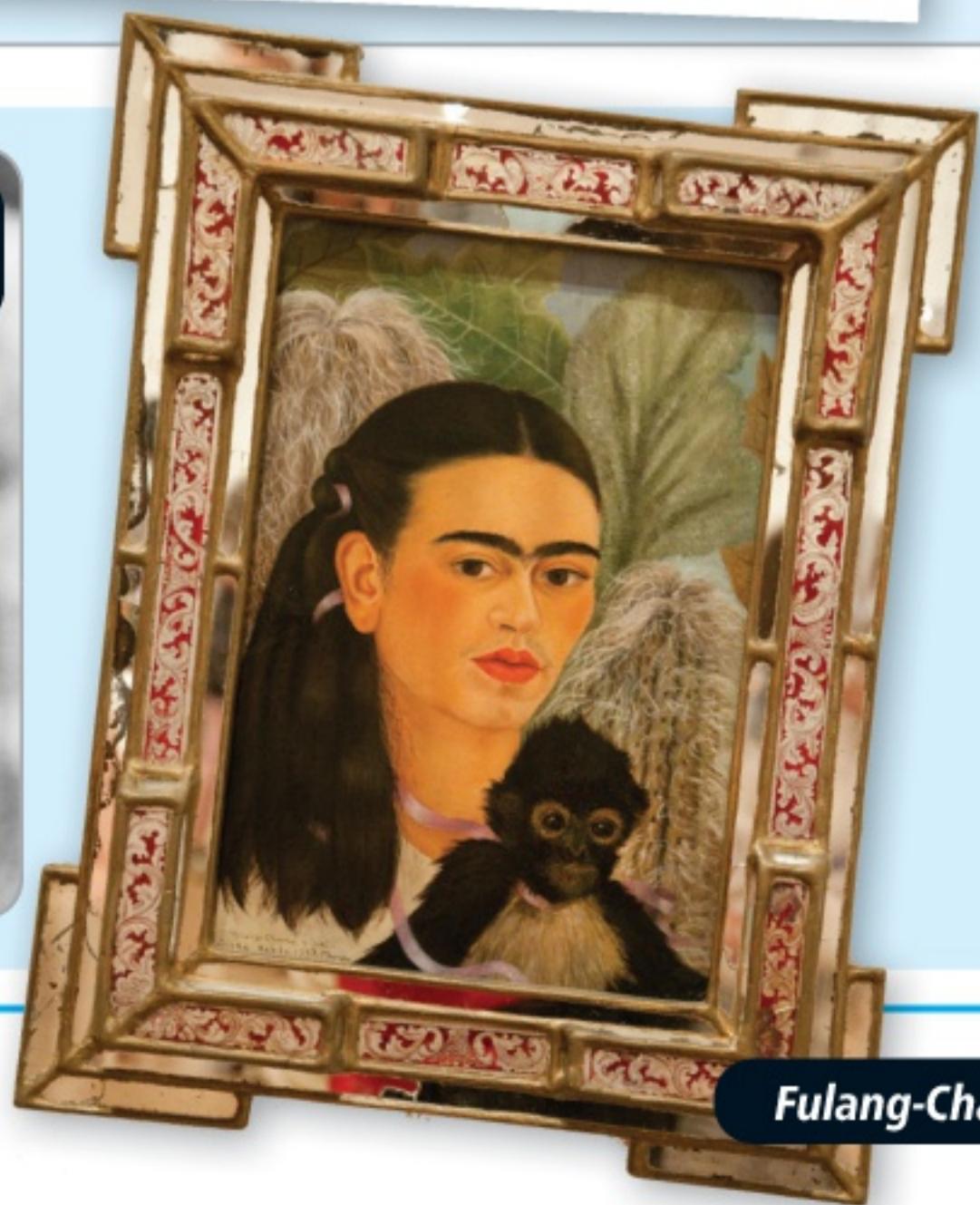
The Two Fridas

DID YOU KNOW?

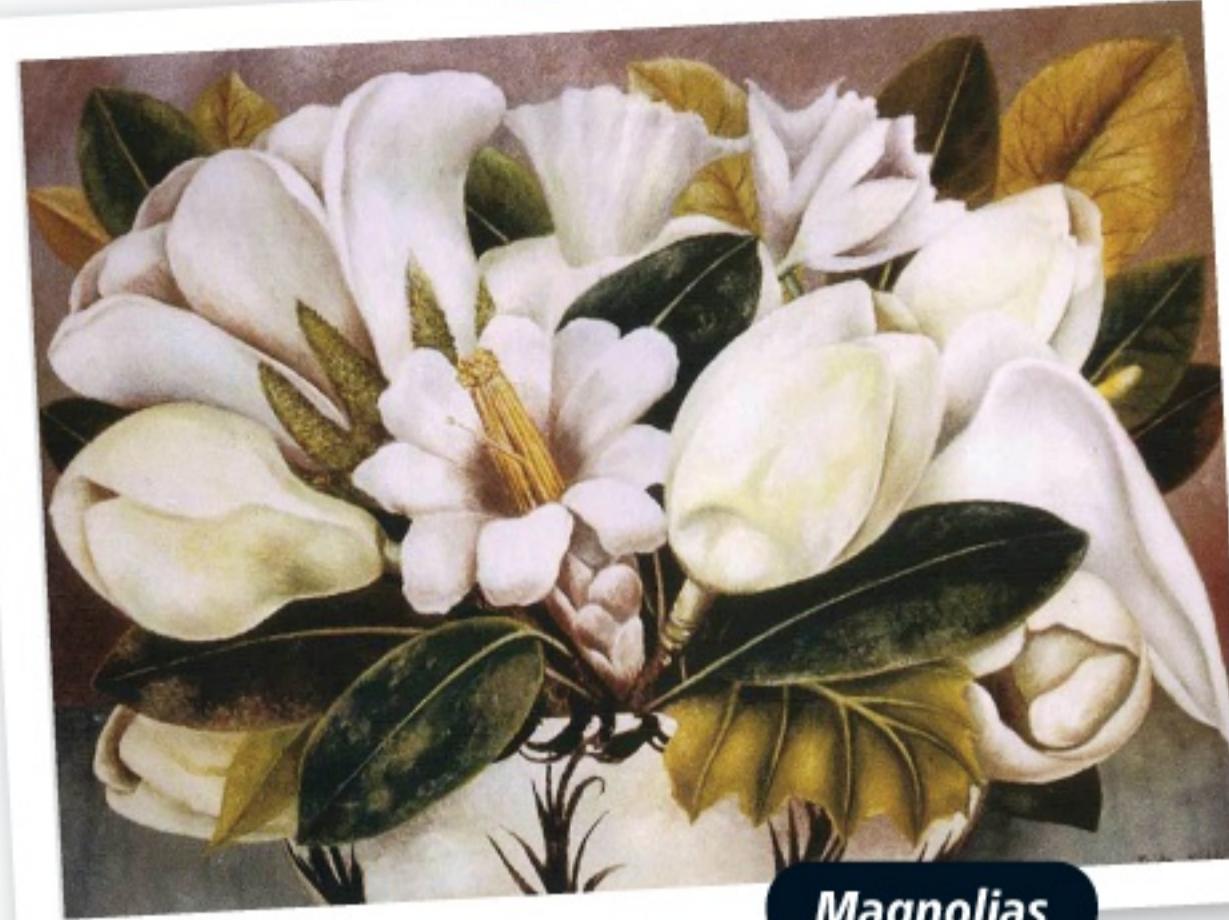
Frida Kahlo was also an art teacher, and she enjoyed working with children.



With her pet monkey



Fulang-Chang and I



Magnolias

Gaining fame

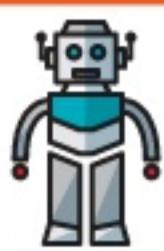
In 1938, Kahlo sold her paintings for the first time for \$200 each. The same year, she had her first solo exhibition in New York City, which drew the attention of influential people in the art world. Kahlo continued to showcase her work abroad, including in Paris, France. She gained many admirers, such as painter Pablo Picasso, who praised her work. Although Kahlo was often considered a surrealist, she said she was a realist who painted her reality. In 1939, she created *The Two Fridas* (shown at left). It is a double self-portrait that has been said to reflect Kahlo's conflicting identities. She was also inspired by her surroundings, including the local flowers depicted in her 1945 painting *Magnolias* (above).



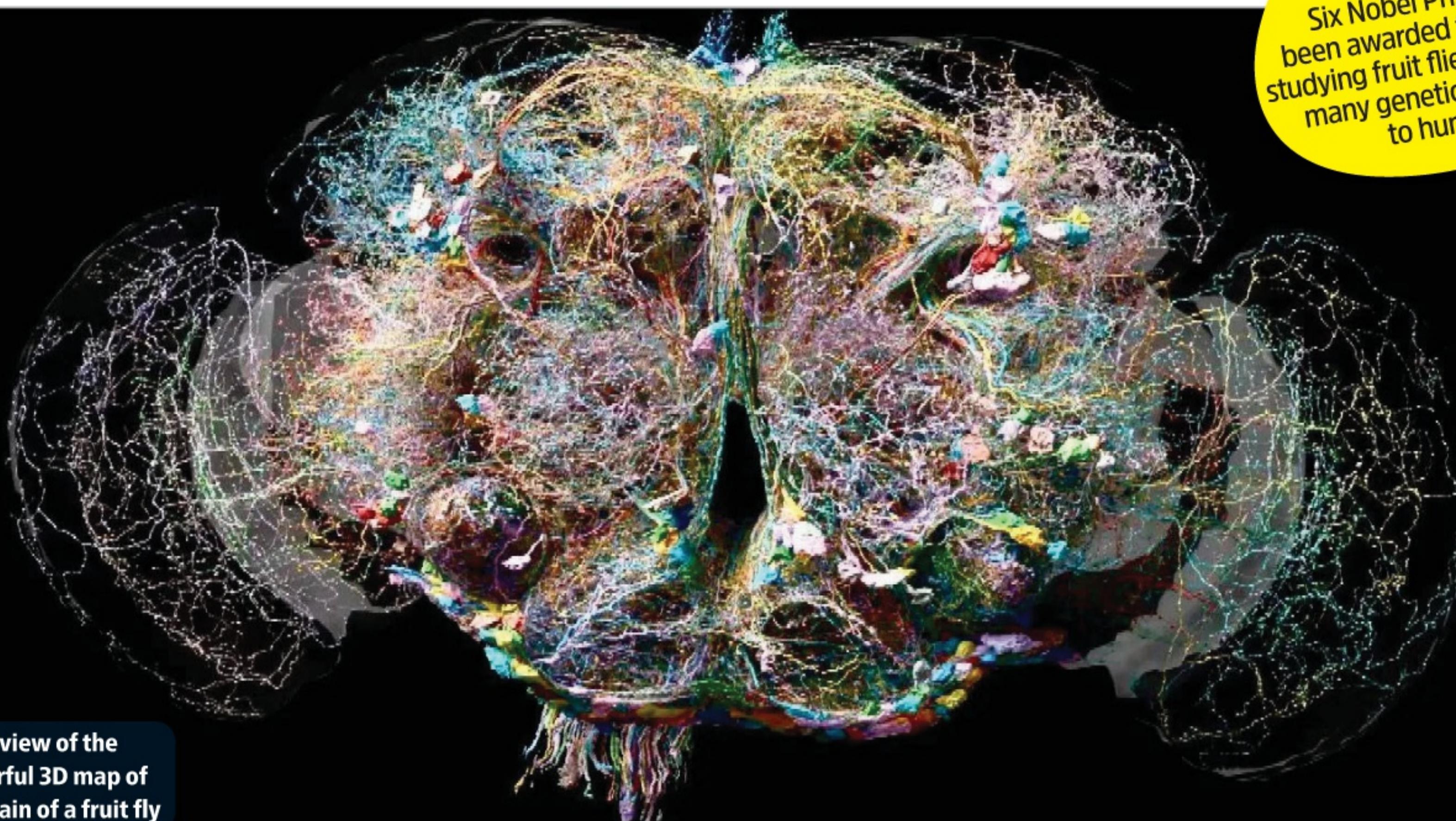
Viva la Vida, Watermelons

An enduring legacy

By the time Kahlo had her second solo exhibition, in Mexico City in 1953, she had undergone more than 20 surgeries due to the bus accident. Still, she made a grand entrance at the gallery on a stretcher and was then placed on a large four-poster bed to interact with her admirers. Kahlo created a total of about 200 paintings, which were exhibited at prestigious institutions around the world. Her last painting (above) depicted a watermelon inscribed with the words "Viva La Vida" ("long live life"). Kahlo died on July 13, 1954, at age 47, at La Casa Azul, her childhood home. Seventy years later, she remains an important cultural figure whose paintings sell for millions of dollars.



Science and technology



A view of the colorful 3D map of the brain of a fruit fly

A full map of a fruit fly's brain

In a major breakthrough, scientists created a high-resolution, 3D map of the complete brain of an adult fruit fly. It is the first full map of the complex brain of any creature and could lead to a better understanding of how brains work in general.

The brain of any living thing functions because of its neurons (nerve cells that carry information to and from the brain) and the connections among them. Although a fruit fly's brain is smaller than a poppy seed, it has 139,225 neurons with 50 million connections. Until now, scientists had mapped only the much simpler brains of a nematode worm (with 302 neurons) and a fruit fly larva (which has 3,016 neurons).

The new map, known as a connectome, shows all the neurons and connections in the fruit fly's brain in extraordinary detail. It was created by the FlyWire Consortium, a network of scientists from more than 122 research institutions around the world. Researchers captured 21 million images of a female fruit fly's brain. They used artificial intelligence (AI, when a computer imitates human learning) to analyze the data and put the pictures together to create 3D images.



A fruit fly

The software made some mistakes, which were caught and fixed by human researchers reviewing the AI findings.

Scientists hope to apply what they learn from the fruit fly brain to the brains of more complex creatures, like people. Although a human brain has 86 billion neurons with 100 trillion connections, it functions in many of the same ways a

fruit fly's brain does. For example, the neurons in a fruit fly's brain allow it to move, find and eat food, and sense predators, just like the neurons in a human brain do.

"Any brain that we truly understand tells us something about all brains," said Sebastian Seung, a lead author of the study.

He is a professor of neuroscience and computer science at Princeton University in New Jersey. "With the fly wiring diagram, we have the potential for unprecedented, detailed, and deep understanding."

The connectome has been made publicly available to anyone who wants to use the data in their work. Scientists hope it could speed up the creation of a map of a mouse's brain (see the box at right) and potentially even a map of the human brain as well.

Mapping a mouse brain



A mouse

Scientists hope to map a mouse's brain as a step toward one day mapping a human brain. A mouse brain has about 1,000 times as many neurons as a fruit fly's brain. An international team of researchers led by Jeff Lichtman at Harvard University, in Massachusetts, is starting to build a mouse brain connectome by focusing on a section of the brain called the hippocampus, which is responsible for complex tasks like making memories.

Mapping the hippocampus alone will create about 10,000 terabytes of data. Mapping an entire mouse brain would generate 50 times that much data. To make the project possible, the team is working with Google Research to use AI to efficiently process and analyze the vast amounts of information.

WOW!
Six Nobel Prizes have been awarded to scientists studying fruit flies, which have many genetic similarities to humans.



Dancing snowflakes predict weather

Scientists found in a new study that snowflakes "dance" in different ways as they fall. This information can then be used to predict the weather.

Snowflakes form inside clouds when water vapor changes from a gas to a solid ice crystal. Scientists from the University of Reading in the UK recently created realistic 3D-printed snowflakes of different shapes and sizes. They dropped them into a tank filled with a thick liquid mixture, which re-created real atmospheric conditions.

The team used high-speed cameras to capture the snowflakes' motion as they fell. The snowflakes had four "dances"—falling straight down, zigzagging back and forth, spinning and zigzagging, and rotating

while falling. It's that movement that could help weather experts.

One of the ways experts predict the weather is with radar that bounces signals off water and ice particles. The signal changes depending on how the particles move. By understanding more about that motion, scientists will be able to interpret the signals more accurately.

That information will help them better predict when the snowflakes will melt into raindrops and when, where, and how much rain will fall. The team found that there is a higher chance of snow or rain when the snowflakes dance more wildly. That's because ice crystals bumping into each other causes them to grow bigger, making rain more likely to happen.

DID YOU KNOW?
Snowflakes can fall up to 9 miles per hour and take about an hour to travel from a cloud to the ground.



When water vapor becomes a solid, it forms an ice crystal that grows into a snowflake.



Wake up in the world of Nintendo

It's Mario time! The Nintendo Sound Clock: Alarmino makes waking up fun with an interactive alarm clock that uses sounds, video games, and motion sensor technology.

Alarmino lets you choose among 35 scenes from five different Nintendo games, including Super Mario Odyssey and the Legend of Zelda. When it's time to wake up, a character from the game, like Princess Peach or Luigi, appears on screen. Next, a character from the

specific scene shows up, and sounds begin to play—like the sound of ink splots from Splatoon 3.

If you dawdle in bed, the sounds get louder and a less friendly character—like Bowser—tries to wake you up. Alarmino has a motion sensor, so it knows when you get out of bed and turns itself off.

Alarmino also uses the sensor to track how often you move or roll over in your sleep. That information helps you learn about your sleep patterns.



A compass that points your way



The Truest North compass

A traditional compass has a needle that points north so you can always orient yourself to that direction. The Truest North compass, however, works differently: It points to a destination of your choice so you always know where you are in relation to it. A second needle

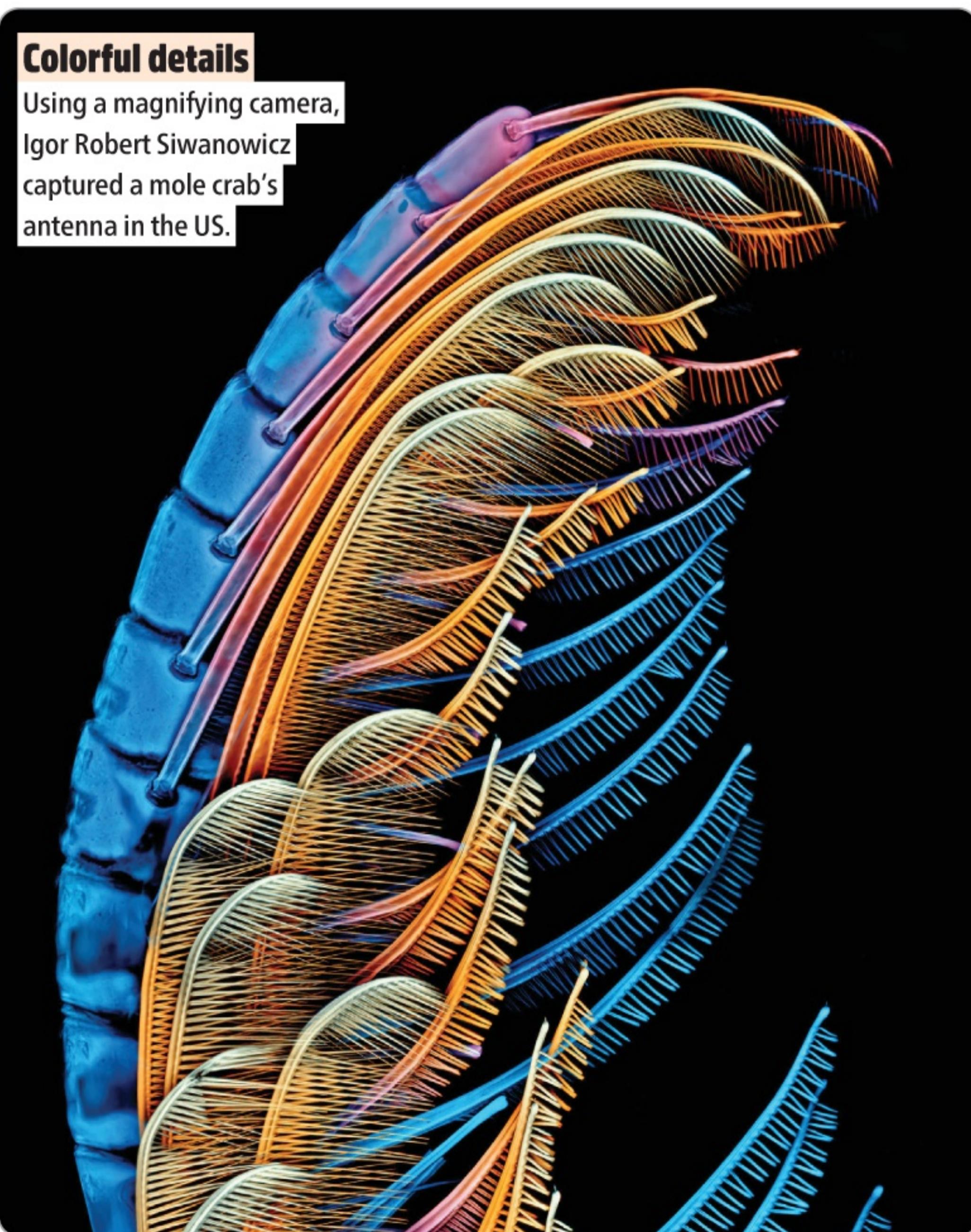
tells you how far you are from your preferred spot.

Once you set a destination, Truest North stores it. The device's designer said it's meant to help you stay connected to a special place in your life, although you can also change that destination at any time.



Photos of the week

2024
PHOTO-
MICROGRAPHY
COMPETITION
FINALISTS



Photos of the week



Looking around

Paweł Błachowicz snapped this image of a green crab spider's eyes in Poland.



So many spores

Joshua Coogler zoomed in for this shot of a moss plant in the US.



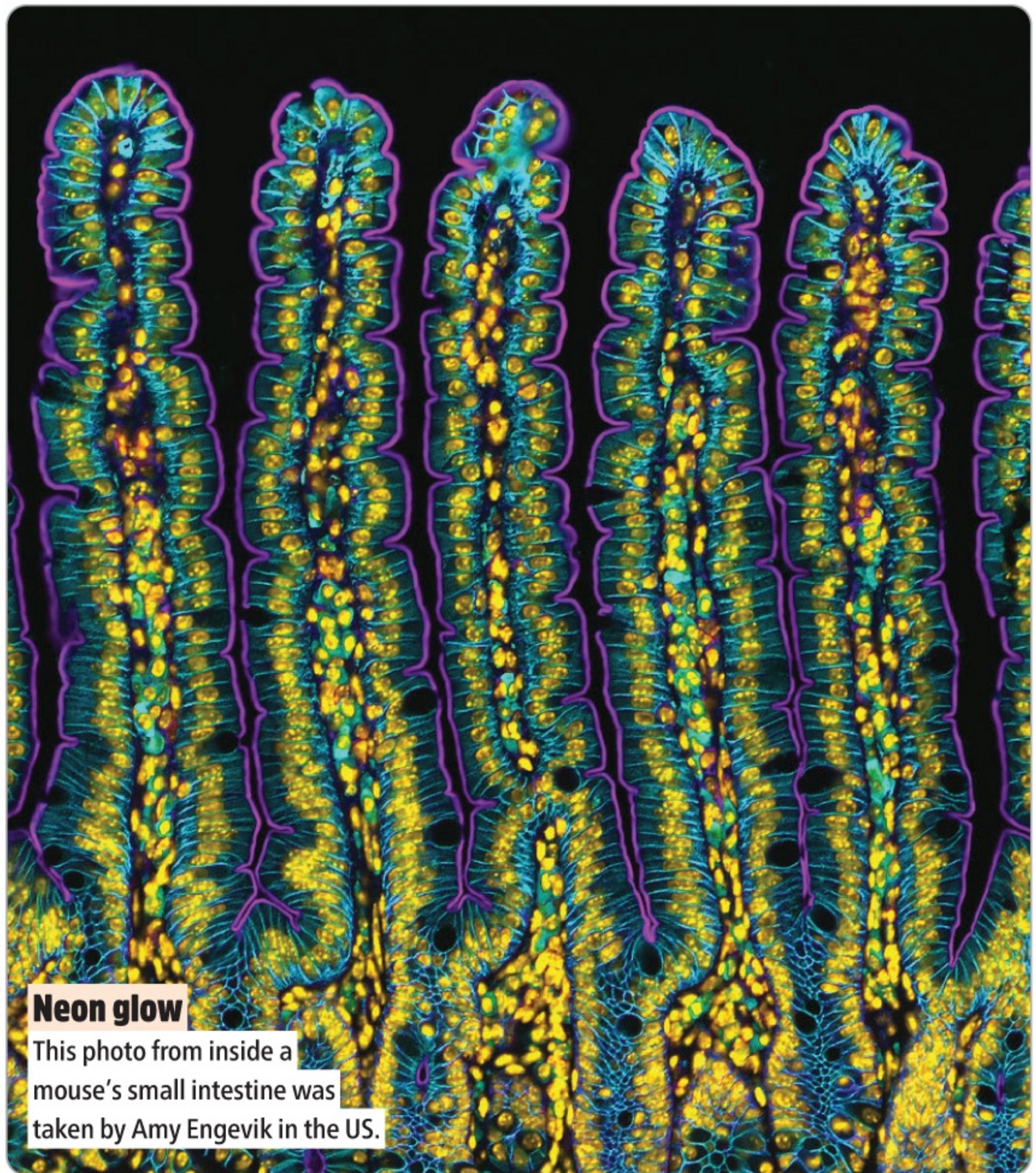
Standing tall

Henri Koskinen shot this picture of three slime molds in Finland.



Neon glow

This photo from inside a mouse's small intestine was taken by Amy Engevik in the US.





Sports



SENIOR SWISH

In 2008, Ken Mink, age 73, became the oldest player to score in a college basketball game.

Dajuan Harris Jr. of Kansas (left) and Elliot Cadeau of North Carolina

New pro league coming



Unrivaled, a 3-on-3 women's basketball league founded by WNBA stars Napheesa Collier and Breanna Stewart, will make its debut in January, during the WNBA off-season. Angel Reese, Jewell Lloyd, and Arike Ogunbowale are among the players who will compete.

College basketball season begins

The NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) basketball season began on November 4. At the start, the top-ranked women's team was the University of South Carolina, the defending national champions. On the men's side, the University of Kansas held the top spot. The defending men's champions, the University of Connecticut (UConn), began the season ranked third and are aiming to become the first team since the 1970s to win three consecutive national championships.

The women's season began with a pair of games played in Paris, France. In the first one, the third-ranked University of Southern California

(USC) narrowly beat 20th-ranked University of Mississippi, known as Ole Miss, 68–66. The game was tied in the final seconds, but USC's Kiki Iriafen made two free throws to secure the win for her team. In the second game, the fifth-ranked University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) beat 17th-ranked University of Louisville, 66–59. In a stateside game on November 10, South Carolina beat ninth-ranked North

Carolina State, 71–57. Te-Hina Paopao led South Carolina with 23

points. Her team was strong defensively, compiling 12 steals and five blocked shots in all.

One big men's game on opening night featured sixth-ranked Gonzaga University and

eighth-ranked Baylor University. Gonzaga dominated from the start and won, 101–63.

On November 8, Kansas hosted the ninth-ranked University of North Carolina (UNC) and won, 92–89. UNC trailed by 15 points at halftime, but they mounted a thrilling comeback and had a two-point lead with less than two minutes to play. Zeke Mayo of Kansas then knocked down a jump shot to tie it up, and his teammate Hunter Dickinson scored the final three points of the game. Overall, the pair scored 41 points combined.

The next day, there were two games between two Top 25 teams. In one, 11th-ranked Auburn University beat fourth-ranked University of Houston, 74–69. In the other, Baylor got back on track and beat 16th-ranked University of Arkansas, 72–67.



Te-Hina Paopao

THIS WEEK'S WINNERS...

TENNIS

On November 9, American tennis player Coco Gauff won the WTA Finals. It is one of the most important women's tournaments and features the top eight singles players and doubles teams.

Gauff, the third-ranked player, beat seventh-ranked Zheng Qinwen of China in the final. In the semifinal, the US star beat the world's top player, Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus. Gauff, age 20, is the event's youngest winner since 2004.



MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER

In round one of the MLS Cup playoffs, ninth-seeded (ranked) Atlanta United knocked out the number one team, Inter Miami, by winning two games in a best-of-three series. Atlanta won the last match, 3–2, on November 9.

FOOTBALL

On November 10, the NFL's Detroit Lions won their seventh straight game by defeating the Houston Texans, 26–23, with a buzzer-beating 52-yard field goal by kicker Jake Bates.



Savannah Harmon of Team USA (left) and Ella Shelton of Team Canada on November 10

DID YOU KNOW?

Hockey pucks are made of rubber and are frozen before games to limit bouncing.

Women's hockey Rivalry Series returns

The 2024–25 Rivalry Series, a set of five exhibition games between the women's national ice hockey teams from the US and Canada, has begun. The first three games were played in the US on November 6, November 8, and November 10, and Team Canada came away with a 2–1 series lead.

Team Canada is ranked number one in the world, and Team USA is number two. Earlier this year, they met in the gold medal game of the World Championships, which Canada won in overtime. Canada also won the last Rivalry Series.

Game 1 of the current series was played in San Jose, California, and Team USA won it, 7–2. It was the first time the US tallied that many goals against Canada since 2015, and the five-goal margin of victory was their largest over Team

Canada in 12 years. US goaltender Aerin Frankel made 26 saves in the win. The teams traveled to West Valley City, Utah, for Game 2, which Team Canada won, 5–4, in overtime. Team USA was down 4–1 with less than six minutes to play in the third period when their offense erupted. Hilary Knight scored twice, and Grace Zumwinkle added a goal to tie the game and force overtime. The score was still tied at the end of the extra time, so the teams went to a shootout. Goals were scored by two Canadian players, including newcomer Chloe Primerano, age 17. Canada's goalie Ann-Renée Desbiens saved all four shots by US players.

Team Canada won Game 3, 4–1, in Boise, Idaho. They dominated from the start, scoring twice in the first 10 minutes. The final two games of the series will be played in Canada in February.



COACH OF THE WEEK

Coach's Name: **Sergii Kukharskyi**

Team: JBarracudas Swim Team

"Coach Sergii knows everybody's strengths and weaknesses and is passionate about our growth and development as swimmers. He laughs and cries with us about our successes and challenges. He's seen and heard at every practice. He is also an amazing role model, competing at the world championship level! Outside the pool and practice, he is a great friend who runs around and eats sweet treats with us!" Juna, 11, and Koku, 8, California



To nominate a Coach of the Week, send your coach's name, photo, sport, and team to hello@theweekjunior.com. Include your name, age, state, and a few reasons why your coach is great.

SPOTLIGHT ON...



Kate Faasse

AGE: 20 SPORT: SOCCER TEAM: UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

Team spirit My parents signed me up for a lot of sports, but soccer was the only one that kept my attention. I love the competitiveness of it and having your team to lean on when you lose together. Soccer gives me a sense of belonging and purpose, and I can't imagine anything else like it.

Top players My soccer role model has always been Alex Morgan. I also look up to Sophia Smith for her relentlessness.



Steady growth My freshman year here I'd get to play five minutes, and most games my only job was to use my speed to hold the ball in the corner. My sophomore year, I played in every game but never won a start. This year, I've made it into the starting lineup and a leadership role. I still get butterflies, but I think a lot about how pressure is a privilege. It reminds me how hard I've worked to get to this point.

Mind matters I am very big on keeping a journal. I write what I feel, and it helps me clear my mind and get out any negative or positive thoughts. It's very hard to be confident in yourself when you're surrounded by 30 of the best players in the country. You need to be your own worst critic, but you also need to be your own biggest cheerleader.

Future goals I hope to help my team make it to the NCAA championship. I also hope to live out my dream of playing professional soccer, along with getting to pursue becoming a color commentator.

Her advice Don't be afraid to dream big, but don't forget to enjoy little moments like laughing with your team and celebrating every small win.



Arts and entertainment



FUN FACT

In 2010, the song from *Wicked* titled "Defying Gravity" was played as a wake-up call for astronauts aboard a space shuttle.

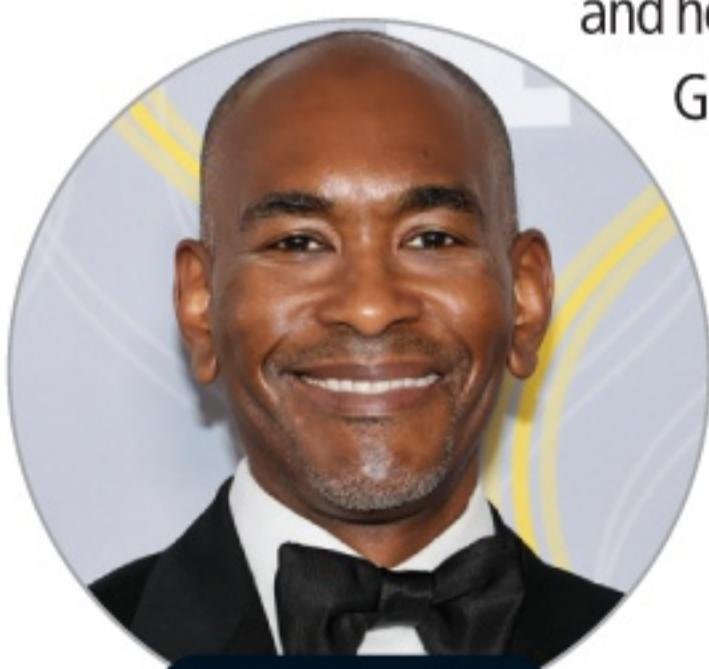
Cynthia Erivo (left) and Ariana Grande in *Wicked*

Wicked coming to theaters

The popular musical about friendship and magic tells the origin story of famous characters from *The Wizard of Oz*.

In 2003, *Wicked*, a musical about two student witches in the land of Oz, made its premiere on Broadway and went on to become an award-winning hit. The show has been adapted into a two-part movie, and the highly anticipated first film opens in theaters on November 22. Part two arrives next November.

Wicked is based on Gregory Maguire's 1995 novel, *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West*. It features characters from the 1939 movie *The*



Paul Tazewell

Wizard of Oz—which was based on L. Frank Baum's book, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*—but it takes place before the events in those stories. The stars are green-skinned Elphaba (played by Cynthia Erivo) and her popular Shiz University classmate, Glinda (Ariana Grande). The pair don't get along at first, and although they become best friends, their relationship changes over time. They end up as the Wicked Witch of the West and Glinda the Good Witch of the South.

The film's costume designer, Paul Tazewell, told *The Week Junior* that

director Jon M. Chu wanted to create a fresh version of the story for the big screen. Tazewell said it was important that the characters' clothes reflected their evolving identities. He created pink, radiant looks for Glinda. She has a crown with a bubble pattern on it, a nod to the way Glinda travels in the original film. Elphaba's clothes, meanwhile, reflect textures from nature.

The film, of course, is about more than fashion. Tazewell said it shows how people can become powerful by realizing their potential: "Even when you feel misunderstood or marginalized, great strength can come from staying true to your gifts."

3 facts about the film



Set secrets

The movie was filmed in England, and 9 million tulips were planted there to create the Munchkinland scenes. Some of the flowers were harvested and used on Munchkinland houses and to dye the yellow brick road.

The Emerald City

The design of the film's Emerald City was inspired by the historic 1893 World's Fair in Chicago, Illinois (below). The fair's large white buildings were also believed to have inspired author L. Frank Baum's vision of Oz.



Special train

The Emerald City Express is a 16-foot-long computer-generated train. It features power-generating clocks and mechanical devices that were inspired by innovations developed in 18th-century France.

SCREEN STYLE

Spellbound's kingdom was inspired by Spain in the 700s to 1400s.

Arts and entertainment



Musical fairy tale with a twist

A new animated musical about a princess with a big family problem is coming to Netflix. *Spellbound* revolves around Ellian, a teen whose parents, the king and queen of Lumbria, have been transformed into monsters by a mysterious spell. It is a story about the complex relationship between children and parents, as well as acceptance, truth, and what makes a family. The movie premieres on November 22.

Spellbound was directed by Vicky Jenson, the co-director of *Shrek*. She told *The Week Junior* that the film is "a fairy-tale twist on a modern story." Because Ellian's parents have become monsters, interacting with them is nearly impossible and she misses the things they used to do together. Although the princess (who is voiced by Rachel Zegler, the star of next

year's live-action *Snow White* movie) is at an age when she is trying to figure out who she is and separate from her parents, she isn't ready to be a full adult. "To have them lost to this spell at that moment is conflicting," Jenson said.

Spellbound's songs were written by Alan Menken and Glenn Slater, the team who wrote the music for *The Little Mermaid*, *Tangled*, and other major hits. Jenson said having songs in the film was helpful because it's "a way to layer in big feelings." Two songs Ellian sings are "The Way It Was Before" and "What About Me?" Jenson said that one of the main messages to take away from *Spellbound* is that families can change without ruining your life. "It doesn't even matter whether the family looks the way you think it should," she said. "If there is love, that bond is unbreakable."



Rachel Zegler



Do you have a film or TV show to recommend to other kids? Send your review to hello@theweekjunior.com.



READER RECOMMENDS

One Piece

TV-14 (Netflix, Hulu, or rent on other platforms)
"This is a series about pirates on a hunt for treasure. I love it so much because I enjoy seeing the characters' determination to reach their goals. My favorite character is Zoro. He is very sure of himself and powerful when facing opponents. It is also amazing to see all the hard work that goes into the show's storyline and artwork. It is a long series, and my favorite episode is the 1,062th one. It features one of the show's best battle scenes, and you get to see Zoro jumping into action. *One Piece* is a lovely, funny, and intense series. I recommend it to people who like anime." Niko, 13, North Carolina



THIS WEEK'S WATCH LIST



An Almost Christmas Story

(Disney+)

This animated short film follows a curious young owl named Moon who becomes trapped in the Christmas tree at Rockefeller Plaza in New York City. As she navigates the city, she meets a young girl named Luna and they embark on a magical adventure to find their way home.



Harry Potter: Wizards of Baking

(Max)

Twins James and Oliver Phelps, who played Fred and George Weasley in the *Harry Potter* films, host this new competition series in which teams of pastry chefs and cake artists compete to whip up desserts inspired by the Potterverse. Expect to see special guests from the films join the judges.



Our Oceans

(Netflix)

Former President Barack Obama narrates this new documentary series about marine life. The crew used underwater drone cameras and other technology to record behaviors such as whale sharks creating fish whirlpools and octopuses using bioluminescence on the ocean floor.



On screen



Dragon Quest III
2D-HD Remake

An updated role-playing quest

Dragon Quest III 2D-HD Remake is a rebuild of a classic role-playing game (RPG) that is part of a franchise that launched in Japan in 1986. It is out now for the Nintendo Switch, PlayStation 5, Xbox consoles, and PC.

Dragon Quest I revolutionized the RPG genre. There are now 11 main series games, plus spin-offs and remakes. This is not the first time Dragon Quest III has been remade, but this version features big changes, such as graphics that honor the 2D classic but give the game modern-looking characters, brighter colors, and a feeling of exploring the world in three dimensions.

One thing that hasn't changed in Dragon Quest III is its story. You choose to play as the male or female child of legendary warrior Ortega, who fell into a volcano years ago while

fighting the villain Baramos. On your 16th birthday, you are called from your home in the castle town of Aliahan and sent off to finally defeat Baramos. As you travel the world, you visit settings modeled after historic places such as ancient Rome and Egypt. Up to three characters can be recruited to join your traveling team. They can have one of several jobs and skill sets. The game has a turn-based combat system, and over time, everyone levels up with experience points to add moves and gain strength.

Part of Dragon Quest involves finding monsters. In a new element, you recruit them to fight. Some of them are friendly and some are not. The most famous monsters are the Slimes, the series' mascots. Their droplet-shaped bodies and goofy faces always bring laughs—and they make loyal friends, too.



APP OF THE WEEK

TOUCHGRIND X

Apple App Store, Google Play

The Touchgrind series of games features extreme sports—this one centers on mountain bike racing. You can compete with up to 12 players in settings such as desert canyons, forests, and cities, and score points for performing tricks. You can also choose different riders, bikes, and game modes.



LEARN NEW TRICKS



WEBSITE OF THE WEEK



SAN DIEGO ZOO LIVE CAMERAS

zoo.sandiegozoo.org/live-cameras

At the San Diego Zoo in California, cameras inside animal enclosures allow people to observe pandas, koalas, baboons, polar bears, elephants, and other animal residents. During local daylight hours, you can watch the live action on this site. At night, the zoo streams that day's feeds.



CHANNEL OF THE WEEK

EMILY'S SCIENCE LAB

youtube.com/@EmilysScienceLab

Aerospace engineer and television host Emily Calandrelli fills this channel with videos of fun science experiments. They include one in which she creates unicorn bubbles and another with a demo of how to make "Oobleck," a gooey mixture that acts like both a solid and liquid.



Book club

BOOK OF THE WEEK

The Long Way Around

By Anne Nesbet

(Candlewick)

Vivian's dream of going on a camping adventure without adult supervision is finally coming true. On a family outing to Sequoia National Park in California, her mom and uncle let 11-year-old Vivian, her cousin Owen, and her younger sister Amy camp out by themselves for one night near a small lake. Owen cooks dinner for the group, and they have fun together. But while they are asleep in their tent that night, an earthquake crumbles the ridge of a nearby mountain. The destruction blocks the path back to their family, forcing them to take an "unmaintained" route out of the park that will take them across river rapids and a treacherous pass that's 11,300 feet high. The cousins calculate that the new course will take them seven days to reach their family rather than the one day they had planned. They're worried because they don't have enough food and supplies. Will they make it back to safety? This gripping survival story is sprinkled with funny dialogue and majestic descriptions of the animals, trees, and flowers the kids encounter on their journey.



ASK THE AUTHOR

Anne Nesbet

We spoke to the author of the Book of the Week.

What inspired this book?

I went on a long backpacking trip during the pandemic. We did a route I had been wanting to try since I was about 12.

Did you hike while growing up?

Yes, I loved the feeling of being up in the mountains, but I was nervous about seeing bears.

Did you spend time around your cousins?

I was lucky to have cousins my age in my family. Once,

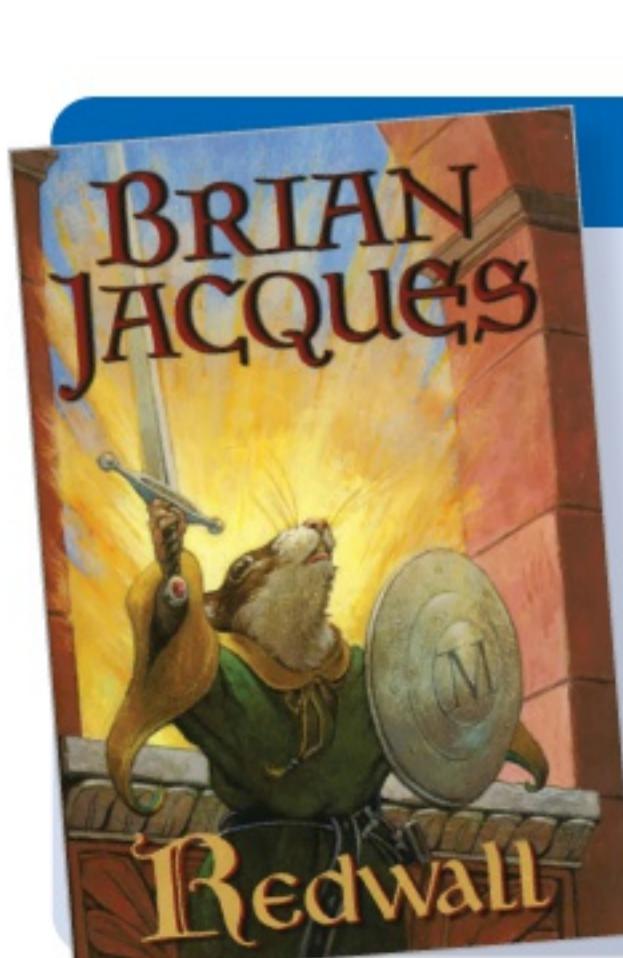
we hiked up a mountain to a lake together and stayed there for a week or two, and it was glorious.

Are your characters based on you or your family?

Bits and pieces of my characters come from people I know well, including myself. But the fictional cousins are very different from the real people who inspired them.

Favorite subject in school?

I loved reading.



READER RECOMMENDS

Redwall By Brian Jacques

"This story is set in Redwall Abbey, where many squirrels, mice, hedgehogs, and badgers live. The main character is a young mouse named Matthias who helps defend the abbey from a rat named Cluny the scourge. This book is part of a series, and I think it's perfect for kids who like fantasy, adventure, and lots of suspense!" Juniper, 9, Pennsylvania

Do you have a book to recommend? Send your review to hello@theweekjunior.com.



4 books to help you enjoy stargazing

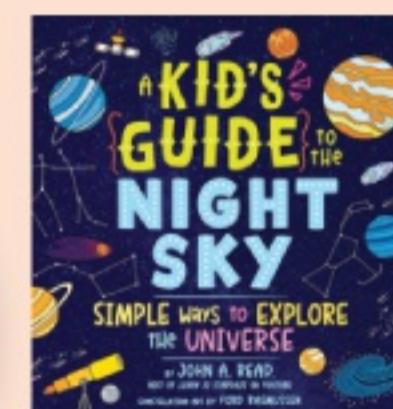
Check out these titles to find out where and when to look.



Glow: A Family Guide to the Night Sky

By Noelia González, illustrated by Sara Boccaccini Meadows (Magic Cat)

This book describes how to spot 15 planets, stars, and other celestial bodies in the night sky. It also contains fun facts. For example, did you know light takes eight minutes to travel from the Sun to Earth? Ages 8 and up



A Kid's Guide to the Night Sky

By John A. Read

(Sourcebooks Explore)

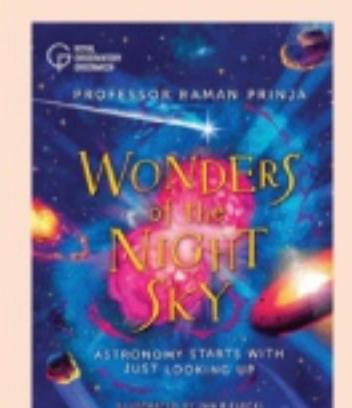
This new book explains how the sky changes with each season, when to look for meteor showers, and which planet is often mistaken for a UFO. The chapter about what constellations you can view without a telescope is particularly interesting. Ages 8 and up



Sky Explorer

By Elizabeth Jenner, illustrated by Anja Sušanj (Nosy Crow)

This beginners' pocket-size guide describes what to look for in the sky—at night and during the day. It also includes several fun experiments, such as how to create a rainbow with water, a mirror, and a flashlight. The attached red ribbon bookmark helps you hold your place. Ages 7 and up



Wonders of the Night Sky

By Raman Prinja, illustrated by Jan Bielecki

(Aladdin/Beyond Words)

On a clear night, 100 to 2,000 stars are visible in the sky. This book helps you find them and explains the differences in their colors and brightness. An "Astronomy Catch-Up" section provides a tour of the solar system and fills you in on the life cycle of stars. Ages 8 and up



How to...



Give flag football a try

Check out this fun, fast sport—no experience required!

Flag football is one of the fastest-growing sports in the US. No specific skills are required to play, and boys and girls of all ages can join. "Flag football is a sport for everyone," Kelly Hantman, co-founder of Westfield PAL Girls Flag Football, in Westfield, New Jersey, told *The Week Junior*. "It's an opportunity to participate in something just for fun and learn the values of being part of a team, like collaboration, facing a challenge, and learning success." Here's how to get started.

Understand the game

Flag football is a "no contact" sport, which means players don't tackle one another like they do in regular football. Instead, each player wears a belt with two small flags. Players try to remove one or both of their opponent's flags to end a play. The field in flag football is shorter than a traditional football field—about 50 yards long and 25 yards wide, with two end zones that are 10 yards deep. A game is played between two teams of five to eight players who attempt to score points by moving the ball down the field to cross the goal line and score a touchdown. A game typically lasts about 40 minutes and is split into two 20-minute halves.



Minimal equipment is needed.

Enjoy yourself

Flag football is about learning the game and having fun. "Flag football also helps grow special bonds in families," said Hantman. "Many are enjoying the experience of football together for the first time."

Sign up to play

With an adult's help, you can look for opportunities to learn and play flag football. Find out from your local recreation center, parks department, or Police Athletic League if they are hosting flag football clinics, leagues, and tournaments. You can also search for a flag football team near you at nflflag.com or nationalflagfootball.com. To play, you'll need a belt with flags, a team jersey, and a football. Cleats are useful but optional.

Get some practice

"Speed is an advantage in flag football for running the ball and to pull flags," said Hantman. Practice running up and down the field, flag pulling, and throwing and catching the ball. You can also practice tucking the ball close to you to protect it from opponents. With the help of a coach or an experienced player, you can also learn basic plays.

Olympic debut



Flag football will be played in the Olympics for the first time at the 2028 Games in Los Angeles, California. The US, currently the top team in men's and women's flag football, will try to win gold. Mexico will also be a team to watch among both the men and the women.

Games will feature five players per team on the field. The venue for competition and the schedule will be announced closer to the Games.

"We have no doubt flag football is going to light up the Games when it makes its debut in four years' time," said Pierre Trochet, president of the International Federation of American Football.



FUN FACT

Some believe the word "gnocchi" comes from the Italian word *nocca*, which means "knuckle."

Bake a batch of sheet pan gnocchi

Ingredients

- 1 pound package potato gnocchi
- 1 pint (10–12 ounces) assorted cherry or grape tomatoes
- ½ red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 small head broccoli, cut into bite-size florets
- 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 6 ounces feta cheese
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Instructions

- Preheat the oven to 400° F and line a large rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
- Combine the gnocchi, tomatoes, onions, and broccoli on the prepared baking sheet and drizzle with 3 tablespoons of the olive oil, tossing everything to coat. Season generously with salt and pepper.
- Cut the feta cheese into large chunks and scatter them on the baking sheet.

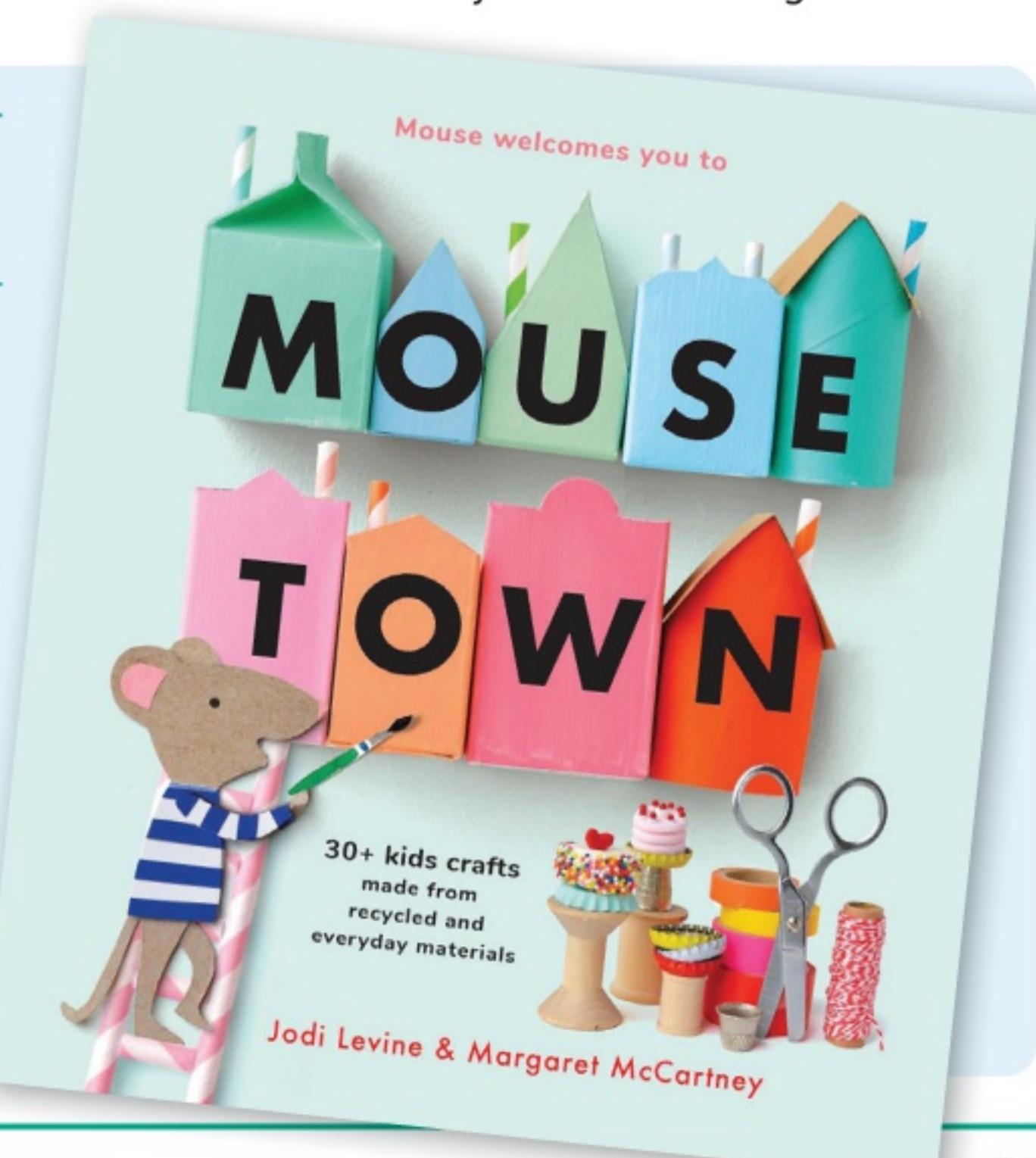
- Drizzle with the remaining tablespoon of olive oil.
- Bake gnocchi for 25 minutes or until the vegetables are tender and the tomatoes are blistered.
- Carefully remove the pan from the oven and toss all the ingredients on the baking sheet to help the juice from the tomatoes coat the veggies and gnocchi. Serve immediately. Makes 4 servings.



ECO TIP OF THE WEEK

RECYCLE MATERIALS TO MAKE MINIATURE CRAFTS

Professional crafter Jodi Levine and illustrator Margaret McCartney have published a new book for kids and adults who love to make crafts. *Mousetown* features an imaginary world of more than 30 projects for Mouse and friends to make from recycled and everyday materials. "In *Mousetown*, we wanted to create a storybook where kids can follow the character, Mouse, through their day while learning how to re-create the story's tiny scenes and props to make their own miniature worlds," said Levine, who also creates the crafts published in *The Week Junior*. You can turn items like milk cartons and plastic bottles into homes and shops and make pie pans, picture frames, or wagon wheels from bottle caps. Levine told *The Week Junior* that she and McCartney were inspired by the miniature fictional worlds in children's books they loved, like *Stuart Little* and *The Littles*. Levine said, "*Mousetown* is the book we wanted as kids so we could learn to make our own tiny houses, furniture, food, and more."





Puzzles



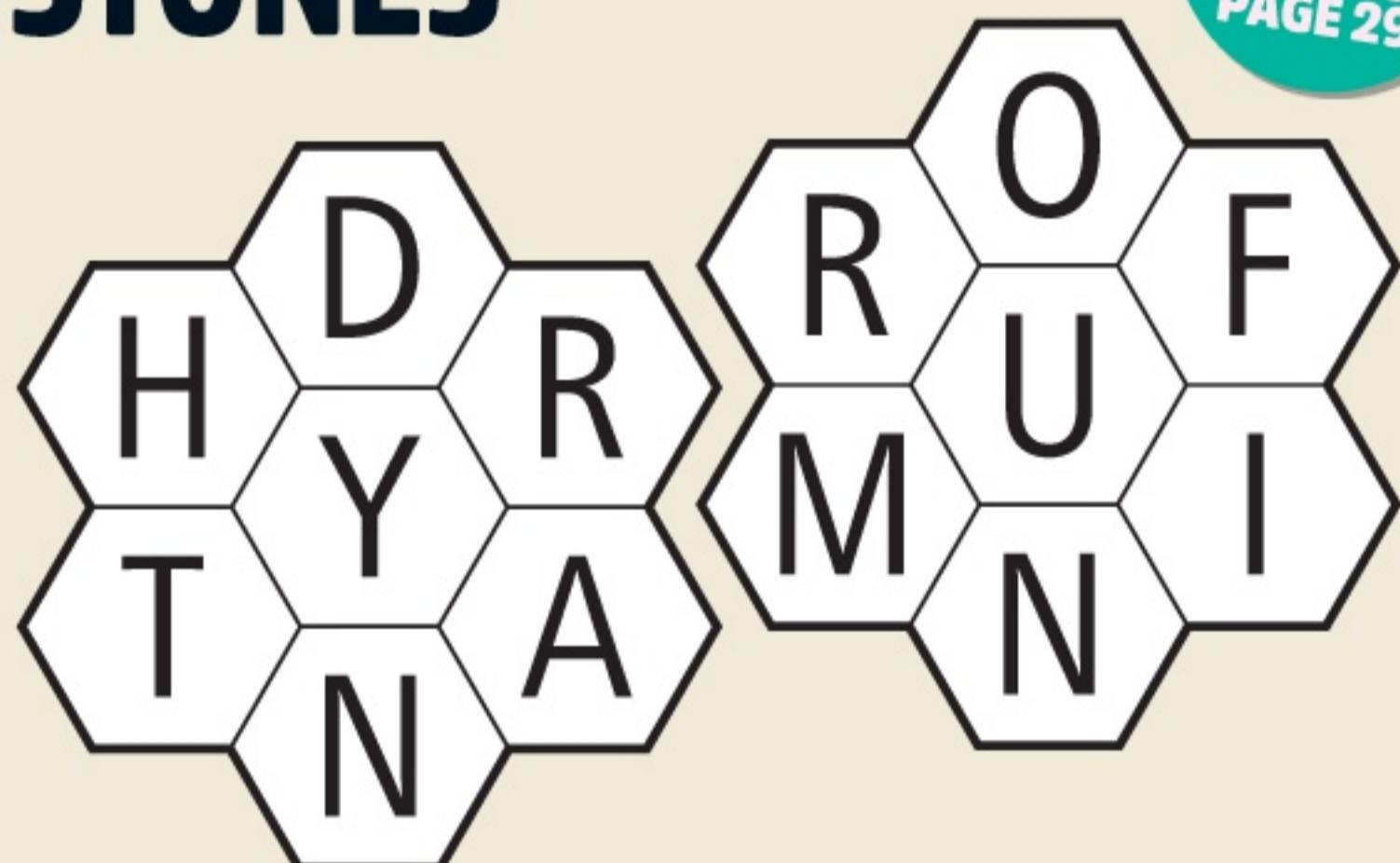
Word ladder

To change the word BEEF into the word TACO, use each clue to fill in a word that is only one letter different from the word before it. If you get stuck, try solving from the bottom up.



STEPPING STONES

Each figure hides a seven-letter word associated with firefighting. To find each one, start anywhere and move in an unbroken path through letters that share a border (no jumping!), using each letter once. (NEED A HINT? Check the bottom of the page.)

**B E E F**

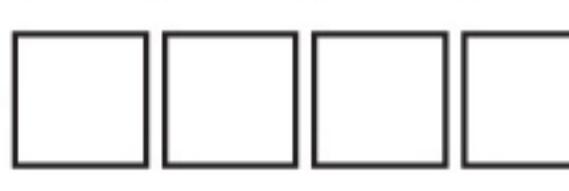
Honeycomb builders ➤



Says "Pretty please with sugar on top" ➤



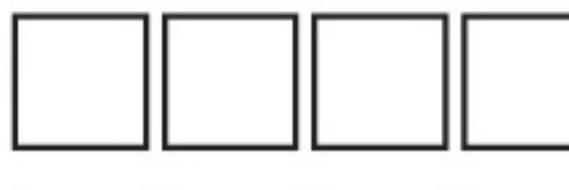
Rabbit friend of Porky and Daffy ➤



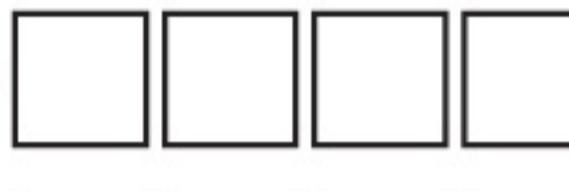
Need for a hamburger cookout ➤



The top bed or the bottom bed ➤



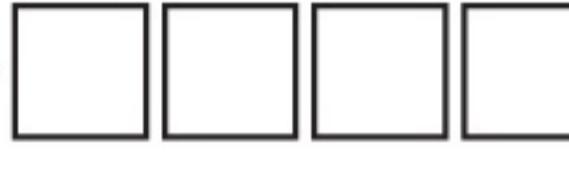
Place that usually has an ATM ➤



Military vehicle with enormous treads ➤

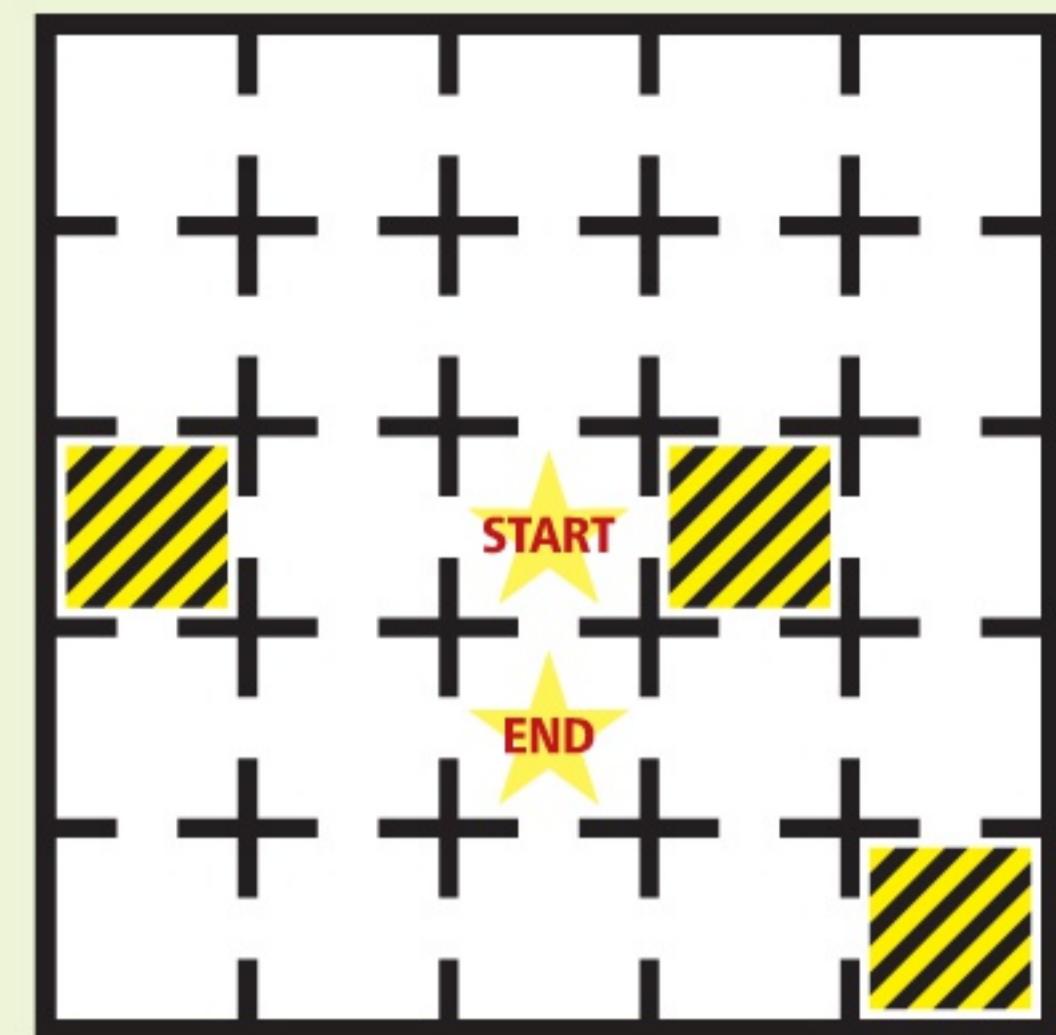


Item used to pin something on a corkboard ➤

**T A C O**

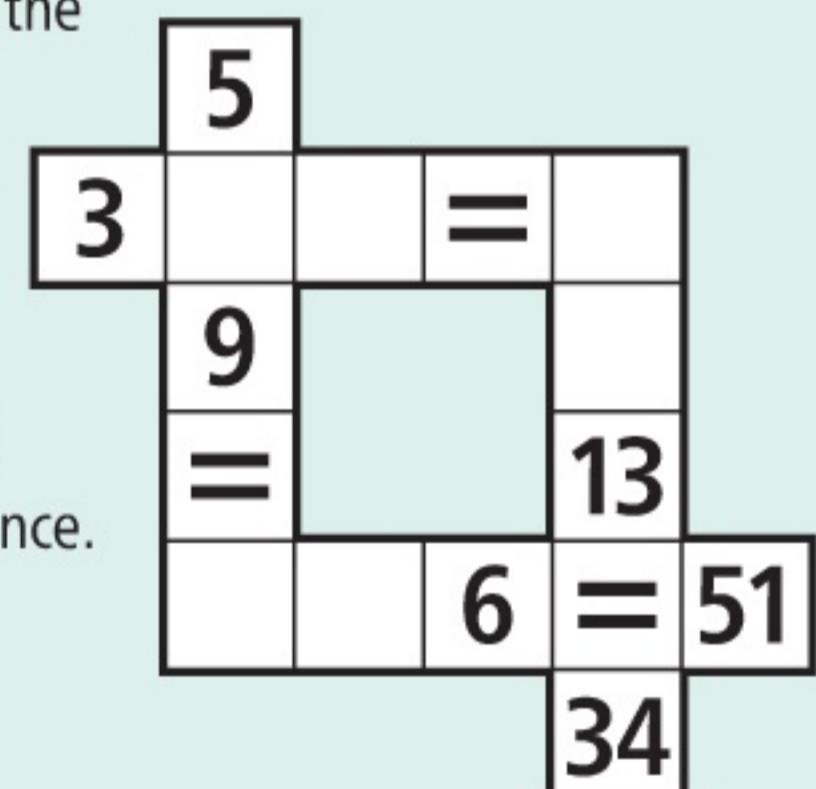
DO NOT ENTER

Draw one continuous path from START to END that goes through every box except the ones containing obstacles. Your path may not cross itself, and there is only one solution.



Crossmath

Fill each empty box with a number or a mathematical symbol (+, -, ×, or ÷) to complete the equations across and down. A symbol can be used more than once.



Spot the difference

These two pictures of a Galápagos Island iguana and blue-footed boobies appear to be the same, but take a closer look. There are actually five differences. Can you see them?



That's unbelievable!



Rent it for the Day-O!

A home that's fit to haunt

The vacation rental company Airbnb has re-created the famous Deetz residence from the recent movie *Beetlejuice Beetlejuice*. Airbnb promises that the home will be as it appears in the film, complete with creaky staircases, a model of Winter River, and a copy of the *Handbook for the Recently Deceased*. The stay is "hosted" by the character Delia Deetz, who welcomes "any artistic soul that wishes to make the pilgrimage." Guests can also visit the Waiting Room and take a special art class using black canvas. Deetz warns, "Just watch out for that pesky trickster in the attic!"



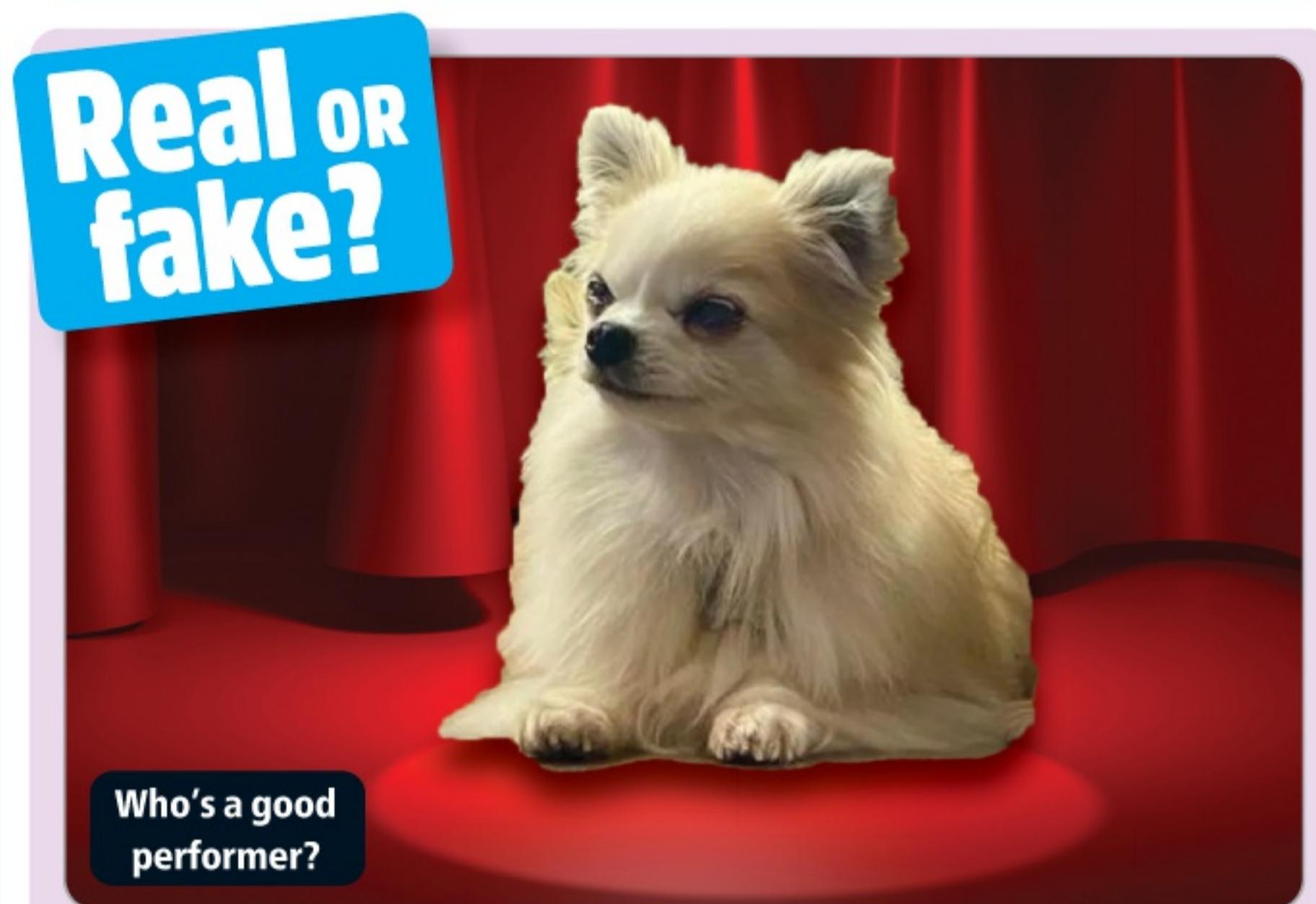
Ancient poop on display

A new museum in Arizona is "flush" with peculiar treasures. Known as the Poozeum, it houses the world's largest collection of coprolites (fossilized poop) from dinosaurs, prehistoric sharks, and other creatures. Some of the 8,000 pieces are "truly one of a kind," owner George Frandsen said, such as a dino bone that "an animal pooped on," insect farts trapped in amber, and a T. rex sculpture called *The Stinker*. The objects provide clues about the lives of extinct animals, he said: "Every poop tells you a story."



A slice of holiday favorites

Instead of a stuffed crust pizza, how about a pizza served with stuffing? The DiGiorno frozen food brand is releasing a limited-edition Thanksgiving Pizza topped with roasted turkey, gravy, green beans, cranberries, and crispy onions. The company says the meal offers "a new way for people to enjoy the flavors of Thanksgiving." Although it may not be to everyone's taste, one online reviewer wrote that the seasonal pie is "way better than one might expect." A DiGiorno spokesperson said she expects the pizza to be popular "from Friendsgiving parties to Turkey Day tables."



Diva dog stars in an opera

In this theater, there are no small parts, only small dogs. A 3-year-old Chihuahua named Bridget has become a canine cast member in the Scottish Opera's lastest production of the comic opera *Don Pasquale*. The doggie diva requires a pre-show nap in the dressing room and plenty of snacks before going onstage near the end of the show, when her cameo appearance as a dog dressed in a cat costume earns a roar of approval from the audience. Is this story real, or are we just putting on a show?*

*Real! This is Bridget's second time playing the role, and luckily she doesn't get often be found relaxing stage side, "in my arms, with her eyes shut." Stage fright. Her owner said that behind the scenes, the puppy performer can



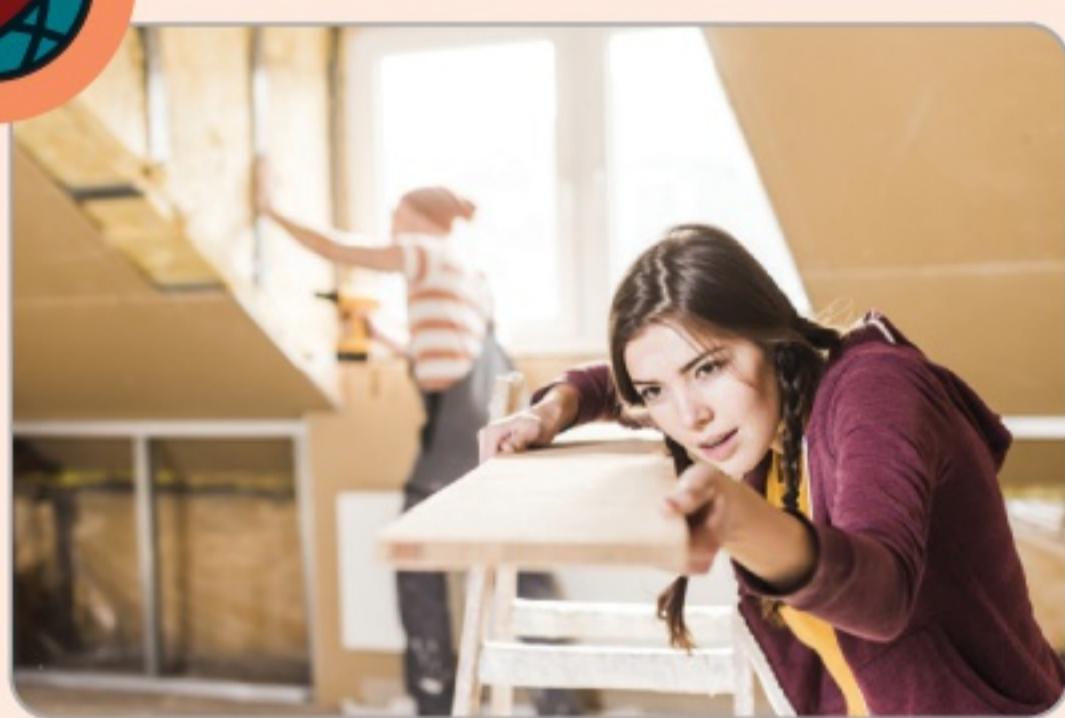
Editor's note

November and December are always big months for movie releases, and this week's cover story highlights *Wicked*, the season's first kid-friendly release that is expected to be a blockbuster (p20). You may already know that the film is based on the hit musical of the same title, which opened on Broadway in 2003, and that some of the show's characters are from the 1939 movie *The Wizard of Oz*. But did you know that both stories began as novels? *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West*, by Gregory Maguire, was published in 1995, and *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, by L. Frank Baum, was published in 1900. I love it when great books become great movies! In this issue we also spotlight the animated musical *Spellbound* (p21), and we will cover *Moana 2*, *Mufasa: The Lion King*, and other films in the coming weeks. Write to hello@theweekjunior.com and tell us what you think of any film you see!



Andrea Barbalich
Editor-in-Chief

CHARITY OF THE WEEK



Rebuilding Together

This organization's mission is to strengthen communities by renovating homes. It works with other groups to repair roofs, install wheelchair ramps, paint walls, eradicate mold, and fix smoke alarms for seniors, veterans, and other community members. It also focuses on weatherproofing houses and helping with recovery efforts in areas affected by floods, hurricanes, and wildfires. Find out more at rebuildingtogether.org.



Your turn

A woof-worthy effort

Is there a more loyal friend than a dog? Too many people feel alone, and too many dogs need a home. I volunteered with the Humane Society of Tampa Bay and saw that some dogs take longer to get adopted, usually because of age, breed, or health issues. For my Boy Scout Eagle Project, I wanted to help these dogs find their forever homes. I made Puppy Rescue Packs to make it easy for new dog owners to say yes. I gave them everything they needed to bring these dogs home, such as dog treats, toys, beds, leashes, and collars. You can help your local shelter too. We can make a difference. ■



Peter, 14, Florida

Have you done something interesting or raised money for a cause you care about? Whatever you're up to, we want to hear about it at hello@theweekjunior.com.

RIDDLE OF THE WEEK
What can you break with just your voice?
Silence



Your dream for the nation

Zikora, age 12, of Maryland told us she likes democracy because it gives people the freedom to vote. Zikora hopes leaders will pass laws that benefit future generations. As a reader of *The Week Junior*, you may be forming opinions about your hopes for the US. If so, we want to hear them! Go to kids.theweekjunior.com/activities to download a form like the one at right. Fill it out, then have an adult email it to us at hello@theweekjunior.com. We'll feature some of the submissions on this page in future issues.



First name	Zikora	Age	12	State	Maryland
What do you like most about democracy and why?					
I like democracy because it gives people the freedom to vote and choose the president. In a democracy, people also have rights and have a say in some things like laws and new ideas. I think if we weren't a democracy, we probably would have total chaos.					
If you could describe democracy in three words, which words would you choose?					
Vote People Freedom					
What is your hope for democracy in the US?					
My hope for the democracy of the US is that people will vote for laws that will benefit future generations.					
Draw a picture of what democracy looks like to you.					
<small>By submitting your drawing, you give The Week Junior the right to publish it on the website and in print. Please get prior parent/guardian permission before sending in your drawing.</small>					

THE WEEK
Junior

IT'S YOUR TURN

Email your news, views, and photos to hello@theweekjunior.com.

Your turn



YOUR PHOTOS

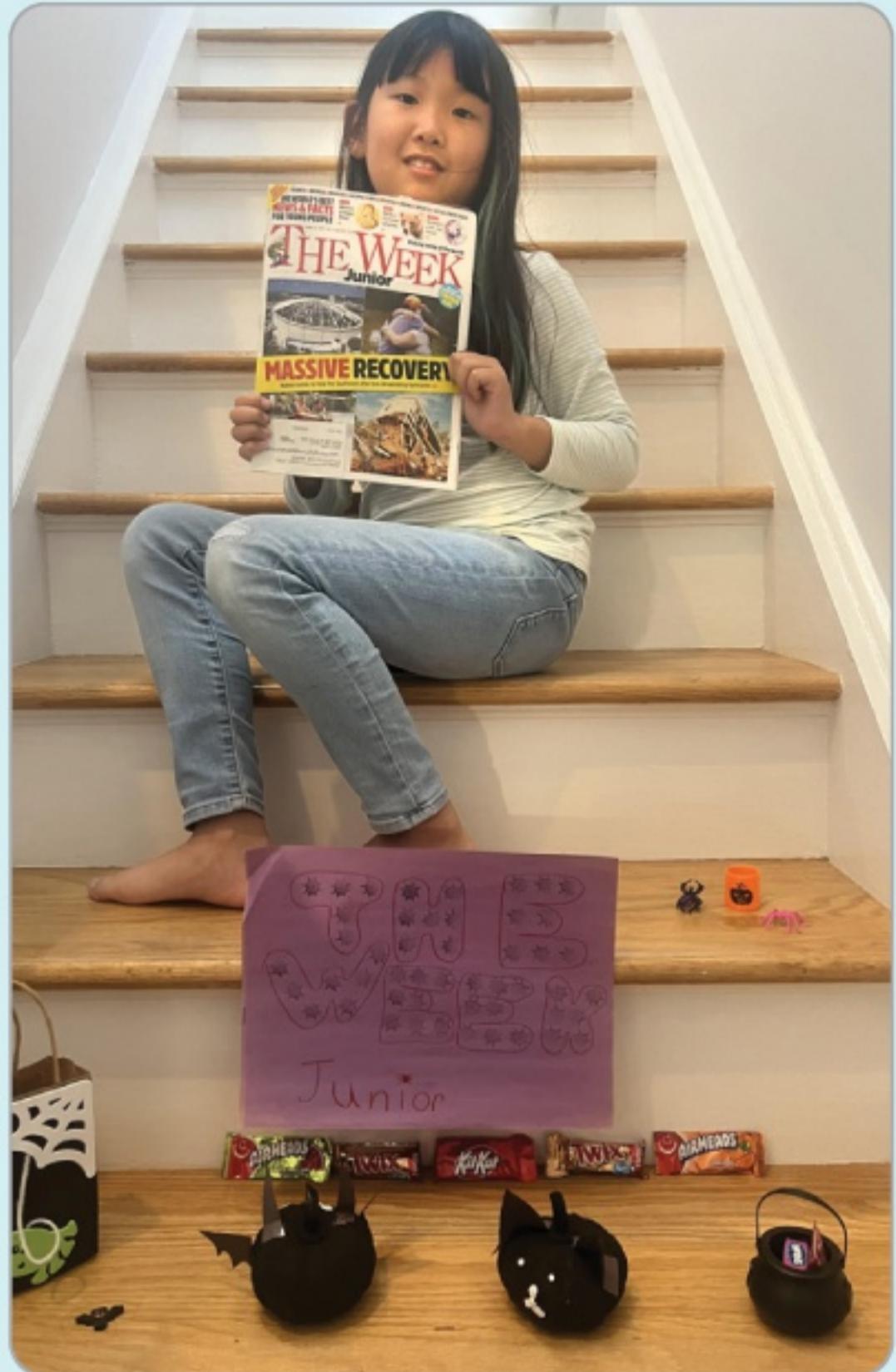
We'd love to see pictures you've taken or pictures with you in them! Have an adult email them to us at hello@theweekjunior.com, along with anything you would like us to know about what's happening in the photo.



“I made the recycled ghoul jar from *The Week Junior*.” Olivia, 11, Minnesota



Ethan, 8, Illinois



“The cat and bat pumpkins were so much fun to make!” Andrea, 8, New Jersey

**Teacher
OF THE WEEK**

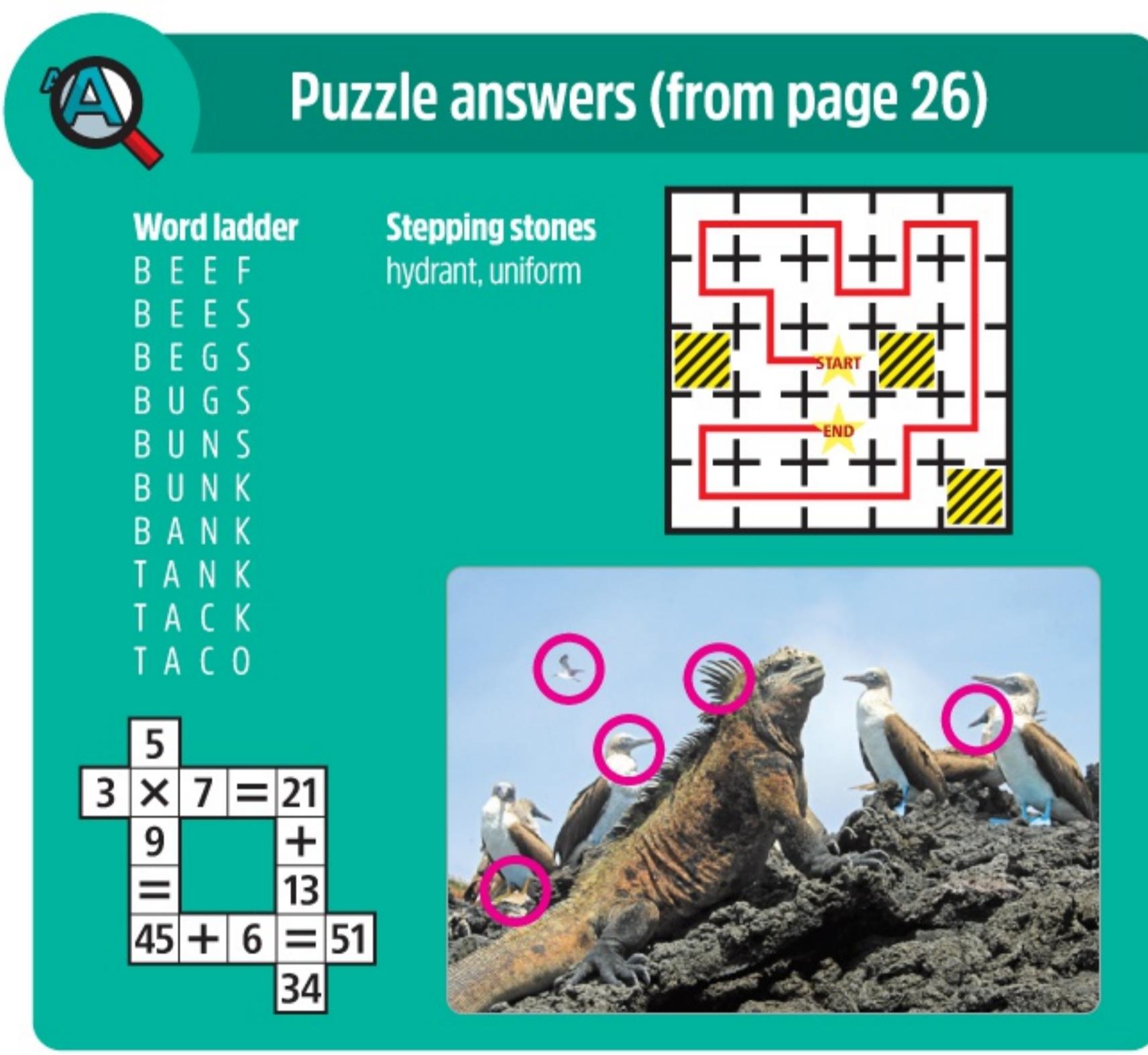
Teacher's Name: **Job Salazar Fonseca**

School: **WL Chenery Upper Elementary School**

"Job is just a magical person. He always wanted me to have fun and be happy. When I felt down, he helped me believe in myself. He is the reason I completed two music books and was successful in two school orchestra performances. He helped me find my voice and overcome my fears through my violin. I will miss him so much."

Cyrus, 10, Massachusetts

Nominate your teacher for Teacher of the Week!
Send your reason for the nomination, a photo of your teacher, and your school's name and address to hello@theweekjunior.com.



Puzzle answers (from page 26)

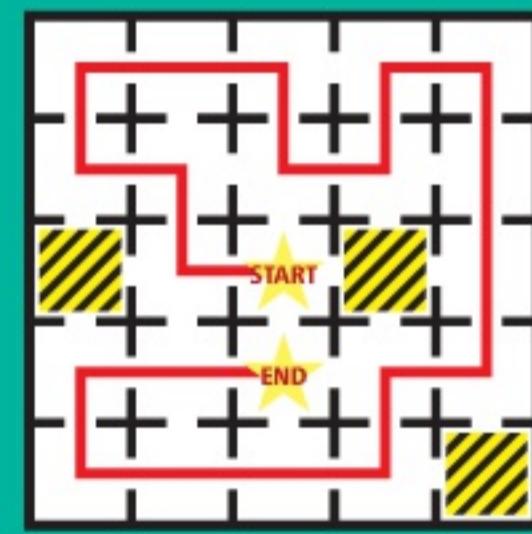


Word ladder

BEEF
BEES
BEGS
BUGS
BUNS
BUNK
BANK
TANK
TACK
TACO

Stepping stones hydrant, uniform

hydrant, uniform



Quiz answers (from page 30)

1 Nintendo **2** c) Fruit fly **3** False. It was in New York City. **4** Canada **5** a) Produce
6 b) Elphaba **7** True **8** b) Taste **9** False. Humans speak faster than dogs vocalize.
10 a) Baramos **11** True **12** Beyoncé **13** a) Earthquake **14** True **15** Poozeum

We want to hear from you! To have your letters, photos, nominations, recommendations, or ideas considered for inclusion in the magazine, please include your full name, age, and state with your submission. By emailing your submission to us, you give *The Week Junior* consent to publish it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending anything to us.



Quiz

How much of this week's news can you remember?

1 What video game company released its own alarm clock, called Alarmo?

2 Scientists recently made a 3D map of an adult brain of which insect?

a) Ant b) Bee c) Fruit fly

a b c

3 True or false? The artist Frida Kahlo had her first solo exhibition in Mexico City.

True False

4 Which country does the US play in the annual women's hockey games known as the Rivalry Series?

5 Sirish Subash won the 2024 3M Young Scientist Challenge for creating a device that detects pesticides on what?

a) Produce b) Furniture c) Clothing

a b c

6 What is the name of the green-skinned witch in *Wicked*?

a) Glinda b) Elphaba c) Dorothy

a b c

7 True or false? Music legend Quincy Jones produced the best-selling album of all time.

True False

8 Some species of fish called sea robins were found to use their legs to do what?

a) Smell b) Taste c) Hear

a b c



ANSWERS
CAN BE
FOUND ON
PAGE 29.



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